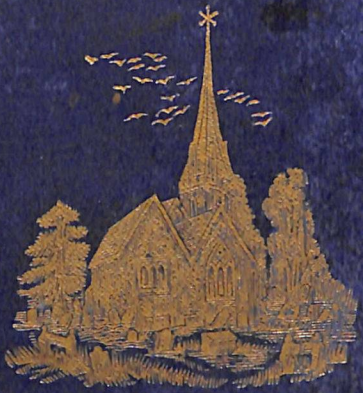

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GRAY'S POETICAL WORKS,

Edited by

The Revd. John Mouttrie M.A.

Charles W. Radclyffe. E. Radclyffe

Sheep's Bridge &c.

Eton Playing Fields

London:

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ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

THOMAS GRAY

ENGLISH AND LATIN

Illustrated

THE ETON EDITION

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

LIFE, BY THE REV. J. MITFORD 1
LECTURE ON THE WRITINGS OF GRAY, BY THE EARL OF CARLISLE 99
INTRODUCTORY STANZAS, BY THE REV. J. MOULTRIE . 141

ENGLISH POEMS.

ODE ON SPRING 157
ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT 159
ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE 161
TO ADVERSITY 165
THE PROGRESS OF POESY 167
THE BARD 172
ODE FOR MUSIC 178
THE FATAL SISTERS 182
THE DESCENT OF ODIN 185
THE TRIUMPHS OF OWEN 189
THE DEATH OF HOEL 191
SONNET ON THE DEATH OF MR. WEST 193
EPITAPH ON MRS. CLARKE 194
EPITAPH ON SIR WILLIAM WILLIAMS 195
ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD 196
TRANSLATION FROM STATIUS 201
SONG 202
A LONG STORY 203
ODE ON THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICISSITUDE . . 210
AGRIPPINA: AN UNFINISHED TRAGEDY 214
HYMN TO IGNORANCE 222

PAGE

THE ALLIANCE OF EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT . . 224
STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY 229
SKETCH OF HIS OWN CHARACTER 231
AMATORY LINES 231
IMITATED FROM PROPERTIUS, LIB. III. ELEG. V. . . 232
" " " LIB. II. ELEG. I. . . . 234
" " TASSO, GERUS. LIB. CANT. XIV. . . 236

LATIN.

DE PRINCIPIIS COGITANDI 239
MINOR LATIN POEMS 249
LATIN TRANSLATIONS FROM THE 'ANTHOLOGIA GRÆCA' 265

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Drawings made expressly for this Work by CHARLES W. RADCLYFFE; *the Steel Engravings by* E. RADCLYFFE; *the Wood-cuts by* S. WILLIAMS *and* SLY.

MEDALLION PORTRAIT OF GRAY, BY FREEBAIRN *Frontispiece.*
ETON PLAYING FIELDS—SHEEP'S BRIDGE, &c. *Vignette Title.*
GRAY'S RESIDENCE, WEST END, STOKE 15
SUMMER HOUSE AT DITTO 17
PEMBROKE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE (ENTRANCE) 48
STOKE CHURCH, EAST END, WITH TABLET TO GRAY . 60
PEMBROKE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE (RIDLEY'S WALK) . . 64
" " " GRAY'S ROOM, &c. . 69
MANOR HOUSE, STOKE PARK 94
MONUMENT TO GRAY, IN STOKE PARK 98
WINDSOR CASTLE, FROM ETON PLAYING FIELDS . . . 114
STOKE CHURCH (GENERAL VIEW) 138
" " (THE PORCH) 148
ETON COLLEGE (GENERAL VIEW) 162
UPTON OLD CHURCH ('THE IVY-MANTLED TOWER'). . 196

LIFE OF GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY, the subject of the present narrative, was the fifth child of Mr. Philip Gray, a citizen and money-scrivener of London.* His grandfather was also a merchant in good repute in the same place. The maiden name of his mother was Dorothy Antrobus. Thomas Gray was born in Cornhill, the 26th of December, 1716,

* Gray's father, Mr. Cole tells us, in his MS. Collection, had been an Exchange-broker; but the fortune he had acquired of about £10,000 was greatly hurt by the fire in Cornhill; so that Mr. Gray, many years ago, sunk a good part of what was left, and purchased an annuity, to have a fuller income. He also says that Gray's property amounted at his death to above £7,000. In a copy of Gray's Poems which was Sir James Mackintosh's, and subsequently mine, he had calculated, in a blank leaf, the amount of Gray's property, and made it nearly about the sum above mentioned. "His income," he writes, "about £700 per annum, which (more than forty years ago) was no inconsiderable sum."

and was the only one of twelve children who survived, the rest dying in their infancy; and he owed his life entirely to the tenderness and courage of his mother, who, we are told, removed the paroxysms that attacked him by opening a vein with her own hand. Of the character of his father it is painful to speak: a long and unrestrained indulgence in the violent passions of his temper seems at last to have perverted the natural feelings of his heart, and ended in that malignity of disposition, that made the parent and husband the enemy of his own family. Such was the cruelty of his treatment to his wife, that she sought the advice of an eminent civilian, A.D. 1735, as a protection to her person and fortune: and it appears by the document preserved, among other things, that *she alone provided for every thing for her son while at Eton School and at Peter-House College, without being any charge to her husband;* that he daily treated her in the most inhuman manner, threatening to pursue her with all the vengeance possible, *and that he will ruin himself, to undo her and his only son;* but that she was resolved, if possible, to bear all this, not to leave her shop or trade, for the sake of her son, to be able to assist in the maintenance of him at the University, since his father would not. No wonder that the memory of this admirable woman was ever preserved with the utmost tenderness by Gray.

Mason says, that he seldom mentioned his mother without a sigh. After his death, her gowns and wearing apparel were found in a trunk in his apartments, just as she had left them. It seemed as if he could never take the resolution to open it, in order to distribute them to his female relatives, to whom by his will he bequeathed them. It was towards the close of his life, in a letter which he wrote to his friend Mr. Nicholls, that we find this feeling still existing in all its force:—"I had written," he says, "to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known; which is, that in one's whole life, one can never have more than a single mother: you may think this obvious, and what you call a trite observation. You are a green gosling! I was, at the same age, very near as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this, with full evidence and conviction I mean, till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but as yesterday; and every day I live, it sinks deeper into my heart."

Gray was educated at Eton, under the protection of Mr. Antrobus, his maternal uncle, who was at the time assistant to Dr. George. Mr. Nicholls once asked Gray, if he recollected when he first perceived in himself any symptoms of poetry. He answered, "He believed it was when at *Eton:* he began to take pleasure in reading Virgil for his own amusement, and not in school hours as a

task." He also asked Mr. Bryant,* who was next boy to him at Eton, what sort of a scholar Gray was; he said, a very good one; and added, that he thought he could remember part of an exercise of his on the subject of the freezing and thawing of words, taken from the Spectator; the short fragment is as follows :—

"Pluviæque loquaces
Descendere jugis, et garrulus ingruit imber."

In 1734 he was admitted as a pensioner at Peter-House, Cambridge, in his nineteenth year. At Eton his friendship with Horace Walpole, and more particularly with Richard West, commenced. With the latter, similar tastes, and congeniality of pursuits, soon ripened into a very warm attachment—"par studiis ævique modis." The corre-

* I have sometimes wondered that the name of Jacob Bryant never occurs in Gray's Correspondence, and that an acquaintance commenced at school, when friendships are warmest and most lasting, did not continue, nor become more intimate, by similarity of studies, particularly as, when Gray was residing at Stoke, they were neighbours. But Mr. Nicholls says, that Mr. Bryant, talking to him about Gray, seemed to think that he had taken something ill of him, and founded this opinion on some circumstances which appeared to Mr. B. to be frivolous, and which he forgot: but he added, that he never heard Gray mention Bryant but with respect, regretting only that he had turned his great learning into a wrong channel. Mr. Bryant's interesting letter concerning Gray will be found at the end of this memoir.

spondence which passed between them for eight years, and portions of which Mason published, shows on the part of both not only an ardent pursuit of literature, but an extraordinary proficiency in classical knowledge, combined with judgment and taste, remarkable at so early a period of life. Nor are the productions of West at all inferior in elegance or correctness to those of Gray: in fact, Mason says, that "when at school, West's genius was thought to be more brilliant than his friend's;" and Bryant says, "West was the better scholar." His Latin Compositions, in my opinion, are beautiful in sentiment and expression, though a few inaccuracies may be detected; and some of his English verses even Pope would not have disliked to own.* In the Letters which form this early part of the Memoirs of Gray, and which passed between him and his friend, there is a purity in the feeling, and an elegance in the subjects and descriptions, which have always made a most pleasing impression on my mind, increased perhaps in no small degree

* *Ex. gr.*

"How weak is man to reason's judging eye!
Born in this moment, in the next we die:
Part mortal clay, and part ethereal fire,
Too proud to creep, too humble to aspire, &c."

We have often heard these lines receive the high praise of one whose judgment, knowledge, and poetical taste, no one would dispute.

by that tender shade of melancholy, which West's declining health, and other circumstances, threw over the opening prospects of his life. A friend, after a long interval had passed, and indeed during Gray's last years, mentioned the name of West to him, when he looked serious, and seemed to feel the affliction of a recent loss. It is said the cause of West's disorder, a consumption which brought him to an early grave, was the fatal discovery which he made of the treachery of a supposed friend, and the viciousness of a mother whom he tenderly loved. This man, under the mask of friendship to him and his family, intrigued with his mother, and robbed him of his peace of mind, his health, and his life. The regret of friendship has been preserved in some affectionate and beautiful lines with which the fragment of the fourth book De Principiis Cogitandi begin, and which he sent to Mr. Walpole, he says, "for the sake of the subject."

"Vidi egomet duro graviter concussa dolore
Pectora, in alterius non unquam lenta dolorem;
Et languere oculos vidi, et pallescere amantem
Vultum, quo nunquam Pietas nisi rara, Fidesque,
Altus amor Veri, et purum spirabat Honestum.
Visa tamen tardi demum inclementia morbi
Cessare est, reducemque iterum roseo ore Salutem
Speravi, atque una tecum, dilecte Favoni!
Credulus heu longos, ut quondam, fallere Soles.
Heu spes nequicquam dulces, atque irrita vota!

Heu mœstos Soles, sine te quos ducere flendo
Per desideria, et questus jam cogor inanes !"

Though Gray in after-life had many accomplished and attached friends, the loss of West was never supplied.* When he removed to Peter-House, Horace Walpole went to King's College, and West to Christ-Church, Oxford. From this period the life of the poet is conducted by his biographer, Mr. Mason, through the medium of his letters. From these we gain no information concerning his college studies, which were probably not very diligently prosecuted. Of mathematics, he was almost entirely ignorant; and West describes himself and his friend as walking, hand in hand,

" Through many a flow'ry path and shelly grot,
Where learning lull'd us in her *private maze.*"

During his residence at college, from 1734 to 1738, his poetical productions are, a copy of Latin verses inserted in the Musæ Etonenses, " Luna

* So far as I can judge, the more intimate friends of Gray were Mason, Wharton, Chute, Stonhewer, Brown, Nicholls. He was acquainted with Hurd, but not intimate; and the name of *one friend* drops off in the correspondence. Mr. Stonhewer, I think, received his rents for his London houses, and Mr. Nicholls was much younger, and a late acquaintance. When at college, the intimacy between Gray, Walpole, West, and Asheton, was called the " Quadruple Alliance," and they passed under the names of Tydeus, Orosmades, Almanzor, and Plato. For an account of Asheton, see Aldine Ed. Vol. I. p. iii.

Habitabilis;" another on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales;* a Sapphic Ode to West; and some smaller poems, among which is a translation of part of the Fourteenth Canto of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered." I give the concluding lines, with which I remember hearing the late Dr. Edward Clarke, when Professor of Mineralogy, finish one of his Lectures, and rest on the beautiful expression of the last line with peculiar enunciation;—

"Here *gems* break through the night with glitt'ring beam,
And paint the margin of the costly stream;
All stones of lustre shoot their vivid ray,
And mix attempered in a various day:
Here the soft emerald smiles, of verdant hue,
And rubies flame, with sapphire's heav'nly blue;
The diamond there attracts the wond'rous sight,
Proud of its thousand dies and luxury of light."

Æt. 22.

In 1739, at the request of Horace Walpole, Gray accompanied him in his travels abroad; and from his letters to West, and his own family, we have a tolerably accurate account of his pursuits. Mason says, "He catalogued and made occasional short remarks on the pictures which he saw. He wrote a minute description of everything he saw in his tour from Rome to Naples, as also of the environs of Rome, Florence, &c. They abound with many

* The twelfth line of this poem is not metrical—
"Irasque, insidiasque, et tacitum sub pectore vulnus;"
but it stands so in the original edition.

uncommon remarks and pertinent classical quotations."* Most of his journals and collections I have had an opportunity of seeing, and I printed his "Criticisms on Architecture and Painting, &c. during a Tour in Italy," which show at once the great attention he paid to the subject, and an extraordinary knowledge of ancient and modern art at so early a period of life. At Florence he made a collection of music, chiefly embracing the works of Cimarosa, Pergolesi, and the old Italian masters, with notices also of the chief singers of the time, and the operas in which they appeared, and the arias they sung.† His collection of engravings also is still in existence; at the bottom of each he had written an account of the picture and the engraver, with a reference to the work of art that describes it. I do not know any branch of the Fine Arts which escaped his observation, or in which he was not a proficient.

* These remarks came into possession of his friend Mr. Chute, of the Vine, in Hampshire, and were probably given to him by Gray. They are printed in the fourth volume of the Aldine Edition of Gray's poems. Others of the same kind I also possess. There is in MS. in my possession a copy of the Wilton Gallery, very amusing, and filled with critical remarks by Gray on the statues; and I have also his criticisms on the pictures then in Kensington Palace. The only collection he himself made in works of art was in prints.

† These books of music were in six large volumes, and were sold at the sale of his library in 1845.

In May, after a visit to the Frascati, and the cascades of Tivoli, he sent his beautiful Alcaic ode to West, and afterwards his poem on the Gaurus. He also commenced his Latin poem, De Principiis Cogitandi. He then set off with Walpole, on the 24th April, 1741, for Bologna and Reggio, at the latter of which towns a serious difference took place between them, and they parted. The exact cause of this quarrel has never been ascertained. I have been told, on what appears good authority, that Walpole, suspecting Gray of having written home something to his disadvantage, broke the seal of a letter. But the matter will never be entirely cleared up. Mason says, that Walpole enjoined him to charge him (Walpole) with the chief blame of the quarrel, confessing that more attention, and complaisance, and deference to a warm friendship, superior judgment, and prudence might have prevented a rupture. And after Gray's death he also wrote to the same person: "I am sorry I had a fault towards him. It does not wound me to own it; and it must be believed when I allow it, that not *he*, but I myself was in the wrong." Such is Walpole's account. When Mr. Nicholls once endeavoured to learn from Gray his account of the difference, he said, "Walpole was the son of the first minister, and you may easily conceive that on this account he might assume an air of superiority, or do and say

something which perhaps I did not bear as well as I ought." Mr. Bryant's opinion, which is worthy of attention, will be found in his letter. I think the following passage, in a letter from Walpole to Conway, shortly after Walpole returned to England, in 1741, is more to his credit than anything else that has appeared relating to this unhappy rupture of friendship. "Before I thank you for myself, I must thank you for the excessive good-nature you showed in writing to poor Gray. I am less impatient to see you, as I find you are not the least altered, but have the same friendly regard for him as you always had." It will be recollected that Mr. Conway travelled with Gray and Walpole in 1739, and separated from them at Geneva. Certain it is, that the wound of what Johnson calls "lacerated friendship" never healed. Gray never after visited him with cordiality, or spoke of him with much esteem. Mr. Cole says, and his account is supported by Gray's own letters, that "when matters were made up between Walpole and Gray, and the former asked Gray to Strawberry Hill, when he came, he without any ceremony told Walpole, that he came to visit as far as civility required, but by no means had he come there on the terms of his former friendship, which he had totally cancelled."*

* See Gray's letter to Wharton, from Stoke, Nov. 16, 1744–5. Vol. II. p. 174, Ed. Ald. where his visit of reconciliation is graphically described. Their friend Asheton

When he parted from Walpole, Gray went immediately to Venice, and returned through Padua and Milan, following nearly the same road homewards through France that he had travelled before. He again visited the Grande Chartreuse, the wild and sublime scenery of which had previously been so strongly impressed upon him; and in the album of the fathers he wrote his Alcaic Ode, his first lyrical piece in Latin. When I spent a day at the monastery, I looked over the album, and inquired anxiously for the original entry, but found that it had long disappeared. The collectors, who like vultures followed the French revolutionary armies over the Continent, swept away everything that ignorance and barbarity had previously spared. Without entering into any detailed criticism on Gray's Latin poetry, I may here observe, that if this ode, or any of Gray's lyrical Latin poetry, be examined with a critical accuracy, it will be found often deviating widely from the established laws which govern the metre; and in the collection of Gray's Latin poetry which is printed in the first volume of his collected works, I have given, I believe, a tolerably faithful account of the errors

seems in some degree to have been mixed up with it, and with him he appears to have maintained afterwards no friendly communications. A friend of mine bought a book at Gray's sale, in which was written "Donum *Amicissimi* Hor. Walpole"—but the word *Amicissimi* was partially erased.

which may be found in them. This certainly will impair the pleasure with which a scholar will read them; but he will still appreciate and admire the fine poetical spirit and picturesque imagery of such stanzas as the following :—

> *Præsentiorem et conspicimus Deum*
> Per invias rupes, fera per juga,*
> Clivosque præruptos, sonantes
> Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem, &c.

Gray returned to England in September, 1741, and two months after his arrival his father died, his constitution being worn out by repeated attacks of the gout. To the friend who condoled with Pope on his father's death, he answered in the pious language of Euryalus,—"Genitrix est mihi;" and Gray, in like circumstances, felt no less the pleasure of watching over the happiness of a parent so deservedly beloved by him. With a small fortune, which her husband's imprudence and mis-

* This second line is very faulty, from the absence of the cæsura in the right place. Mr. Canon Tate also observes, "that Gray, though exquisite in the observance of the nicest beauty in the Hexameters in Virgil, showed himself strangely unacquainted with the rules of Horace's Lyric verse. What a pity it is, that the noble, engaging, and pathetic interest of the Ode on the Grand Chartreuse should be interrupted by a line so jarring and bad as the second of these below, 'Per invias rupes, &c.' in a stanza otherwise of such first-rate excellence." Vide Obs. on the Metres of Horace, p. 200: and Ald. Ed. of Gray, pp. 191 and 199.

fortunes had much impaired, Mrs. Gray and a maiden sister retired to the house of Mrs. Rogers, another sister, at Stoke, near Windsor. But though it is not mentioned by his biographers, I presume that, previous to the family of Mrs. Rogers removing to Stoke, they had lived at Burnham; for Mr. Cole says, in his manuscript memoranda, that "Gray's uncle, Mr. Rogers, lived at a house in my parish, called Cant's Hall, a small house, and not far from the common." And again, in a note on a passage in the ninth letter of the first section of the life, where Gray says, "I arrived safe at my uncle's," Cole adds, "at Burnham, my living. Mr. Rogers was an attorney,* lived at Britwell, in Burnham parish, and lies buried in my church." After his death, it is probable that the family removed to Stoke. The house, which is now called *West-End,* lies in a secluded part of the parish, on the road to Fulmer. It remained up to a late period in the same state in which it was when Gray resided there. It has lately been much enlarged and adorned by its present proprietor; but the room called "Gray's" is still preserved;† and a shady walk round an adjoining meadow, with a summer-house on the rising land, are still

* Mason therefore is in error, in calling Mr. Rogers a clergyman.

† The room called "Gray's", is distinguished by a small balcony.

remembered as favourite places frequented by the poet.

When Gray returned to England, it was neces-

GRAY'S RESIDENCE, WEST-END HOUSE, STOKE.

sary that he should choose some profession; and that of the law was the one which he selected. "Between that," he writes to West, "which you

had pitched upon, and the other two, it was impossible to balance long: examples show me that it is not absolutely necessary to be a blockhead to succeed in this profession." As he saw his fortune was so slender as not to enable him to take the usual course of residing in one of the Inns of Court, and yet unwilling to hurt the feelings of his mother by appearing entirely to forsake his profession, he changed, or pretended to change, the line of study, and went to Cambridge to take his degree in civil law. "But the narrowness of his circumstances," says Mr. Mason, "was not the only thing that distressed him at this period. He had lost the friendship of Mr. Walpole abroad; he had also lost much time in his travels, a loss which application could not easily retrieve, when so severe and laborious a study as that of the common law was to be the object of it; and he well knew, that whatever improvement he might have made in this interval, either in taste or science, such improvement would have stood him in little stead with regard to his present situation and exigencies." That Gray, however, had entirely relinquished all thoughts of his profession, seems to appear from a letter to West; "Alas! for one," he writes, "who has nothing to do but to amuse himself. I believe my amusements are as little amusing as most folks'. But no matter: it makes the hours pass, and is better than

ἐν ἀμάθια καὶ ἀμοῦσια καταβιῶναι."

He now began his tragedy of Agrippina, which Mason thinks was suggested by a favourable

SUMMER-HOUSE, WEST-END, STOKE.

impression left on his mind by a representation of the Britannicus of Racine. His friend objected to

the length of Agrippina's speech; and the fragment is now published, not exactly as Gray left it, but as it was altered by Mason from the suggestion of West. The same friend also objected to the style, which he thought too antiquated. "I will not," he says, "decide what style is fittest for the English stage; but I should rather choose one that bordered upon Cato, than upon Shakespeare." To this Gray answered; "As to matter of style, I have this to say, *the language of the age is never the language of poetry*, excepting among the French, whose verse, when the thoughts or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose, &c." And he then supports this opinion by saying, that all poets have enriched their language by foreign idioms, expressions, and sometimes words of their own composition and invention; that Shakespeare and Milton had been great creators in this way, and none more *licentious* than Pope* and Dryden.

* Some of Pope's expressions, in his attempts to compress his sense, are such as are not warranted by the structure of our language, and cannot be approved; such as, *ex. gr.* Essay on Man—

"Self-love, the spring of motion, *acts* the soul." ii. 59.
acts, for *actuates*.

"Say at what part of nature will they *stand*?" ix. 56.
stand, for *stop* or *stay*.

"Thus *victor* of his health, his fortune, friends,
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends." Ep. iii. 332.

a singular expression, "victor of his health, his friends," &c.

He then gives some instances from Dryden, who is certainly a great master of our poetical tongue, and who abounds with idiomatical expressions; but such expressions as "*museful mopings, foiled doddard oaks, retchless of laws,*" and many others which he gives, appear to me rather exceptions to the grace and harmony of Dryden's style, than ornaments of it. I also think, that the propriety of the introduction of antique expressions, and obsolete words, will much depend on the nature of the poem, and even on the structure of the verse; and that unless used with great caution, and selected with taste and care, they will give the composition the character of *imitation*, which would be injurious to its effect. The language of Shakespeare may

"Well-natured Garth inflamed with early praise."
Prol. to Sat. 137.

for want of the insertion of "*me*" after "inflamed," the verb is mistaken for the passive voice, and is applied to Garth himself.

"What will it leave me, if it *snatch* my rhyme?"
Imit. of Horace, 77.

snatch is put for "*steal from* me, *take away;*" but *steal* had been used just before.

"There are who have not; and thank Heaven there are
Who, if they have not, think not worth their care."
Ibid v. 262.

i. e. think *them* not worth their care.

"Whose seats the weary travellers repose:"
i. e. on whose seats.

And many others might be mentioned in the works of this *correct* poet; so difficult is the art, even to the most skilful workmen.

be more picturesque and poetical than that of Addison and Rowe, but the propriety and advantage of adapting it to modern composition does not appear to me necessarily to follow.

Mason, in a note on this passage of the Letters, supports Gray's opinion, and considers "that following these rules will prevent our poetry from falling into insipidity;" as if fine thoughts and poetical imagery, however expressed, could be insipid. But Mason's own poetry was formed on this model, and its artificial character, and flowery and redundant expressions, were the necessary results. In some correspondence between Gray and Mason, which I possess in manuscript, the former very severely criticised the artificial structure of Mason's poetry. He says, "Pray have done with 'pil'd stores, and coral floors,'" &c. And of another poem, he observes, "The line which I like best in your sonnet is the simplest—'So to beguile my solitary way.'* It looks as if you could live at Aston, which is not true; but that's not my affair." If I recollect rightly, there is but one line in the Elegy on Lady Coventry which he seemed much to approve, and that was one in which the thought and expression were most easy, natural, and just. "Come here, he adds, and I will read and criticise

"Your amorous ditties all a winter's day."

* MS. Letter.

Gray in his academical leisure employed himself very diligently in the perusal of the ancient authors. He mentions that he is reading Thucydides, Theocritus, and Anacreon. He translated some parts of Propertius,* wrote an Heroic Epistle in Latin, and in the summer vacation, when he retired to Stoke, sent his "Ode to Spring" to West; but this letter did not arrive in Hertfordshire till after the death of his beloved friend. West died soon after his Letter to Gray which concludes—*Vale et vive paulisper cum vivis;* "so little," says Mason, "was this amiable youth then aware of the short time that he himself would be numbered among the living."†

I shall here insert a very judicious criticism by the late Lord Grenville, on Johnson's censure of the expression, in the "Ode to Spring," of "*honied* spring;" particularly as the Book in which it ap-

* This he sent to West, May 8, 1736, with a Letter beginning—"My letter enjoys itself before it is opened, in imagining the confusion you'll be in, when you hear that a coach and six has stopped at Christ-Church gates, and desires to speak with you," &c. (MS.)

† West resided at Pope's, near Hatfield, and was buried in the chancel of Hatfield Church. He died June 4th, 1742, in the 26th year of his age. His poems have never been fully collected. I find among Gray's Manuscript Papers a list of them, made out I think in Mason's writing; and there is another among the MSS. at Pembroke College. See in a Note to the Life of Gray in the Ald. Ed. Vol. I. p. xvi. an account of them more complete than any previous one. Mr. Chalmers omitted his name entirely in his Edition of the

peared was only privately printed, and consequently is known but to a few readers:*—"'There has of late arisen,' says Johnson in the life of Gray, 'a practice of giving to adjectives derived from substantives the termination of participles, such as the *cultured plain*, the *daisied bank*; but I am sorry to see in the lines of a scholar like Gray—the *honied* spring!' A scholar like Johnson might have remembered, that *mellitus* is used by Catullus, Cicero, and Horace, and that *honied* itself is found both in Shakespeare and Milton. But to say nothing of the general principles of all languages, how could the writer of an English Dictionary be ignorant, that the ready conversion of our substantives into verbs, participles, and participial adjectives, is of the very essence of our tongue, derived to it from its Saxon origin, and a main source of its energy and richness? *First*—In the instances of verbs and participles, this is too obvious to be dwelt upon for a moment. Such verbs as *to plough*, *to witness*, *to sing*, *to ornament*, together with the

British Poets. The four concluding lines of the Sonnet on the Death of West are as tender and elegant in expression as the opening quatrain appears to me defective:—

"The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain:
I fruitless mourn to him, that cannot hear:
And weep the more, because I weep in vain."

* See Lord Grenville's *Nugæ Metricæ*, 4to.

participles regularly formed from them, are among the commonest words in our language. Shakespeare, in a ludicrous but expressive phrase, has converted even a proper name into a participle of this description: 'Petruchio, he says, is *Kated.*' The epithet of a *hectoring* fellow is a more familiar instance of a participle similarly formed, though strongly distorted in its use to express *menacing*, almost the opposite of its original.

"*Secondly.* These participles of verbs thus derived, like all other participles when used to denote habitual attributes, pass into adjectives. *Winged, feathered, thatched, painted,* and innumerable others, are indiscriminately used in both these forms, according to the construction of the sentence and its context. And the transition is so easy, that in many passages it may be doubted to which of these two parts of speech such words should properly be referred.

"*Thirdly.* Between these participial adjectives, and those which Johnson condemns, there is the closest analogy. Both are derived from substantives, and both have the termination of participles. The latter, such words, for instance, as *honied, daisied, tapestried, slipper'd,* and the like, differ from the others only in not being referable to any yet established verb; but so little material is the difference, that there is hardly one of these cases in which the corresponding verb might not, if it

were wanted, be found and used in strict conformity with the genius of our language. *Sugared* is an epithet frequent in our ancient poetry, and its use was probably anterior to that of the verb, of which it now appears to be a participle; but that verb has since been fully adopted in our language. We now *sugar* our cups, as formerly our ancestors *spiced* and *drugged* them; and no reason can be assigned, why, if such was our practice, we might not also *honey* them, with equal propriety of speech.

"*Fourthly.* On the same analogy, we form another numerous and very valuable class of adjectives, compound epithets, derived like the others from substantives, and like them terminating as participles, but having prefixed to them the signification of some additional attribute. Such are, in common speech, *four-footed, open-hearted, short-sighted, good-natured*, and the like. In Poetry we trace them from the *well-envyned frankelein* of Chaucer, through the most brilliant pages of all his successors, to the present hour. What readers of Shakespeare and Milton need to be reminded of *even-handed, high-flighted, trumpet-tongued;* or of *full-voiced, flowery-knitted*, and *fiery-wheeled?* All these expressions, and beautiful combinations, Johnson's canon would banish from our language. The criticism therefore recoils on himself. The Poet has followed the usage of his native tongue, and the example of its best masters. The Gram-

marian appears unacquainted both with its practice and its principles. The censure seems only to betray the vile passions,* which in a very powerful and well-intentioned, but a very ill-regulated mind, the success of a contemporary had been permitted to excite. The true spirit indeed of this criticism appears with no less force in what almost immediately follows, when Johnson attempts to ridicule a passage, which few other men have read without delight—Gray's beautiful invocation of the Thames in the 'Ode on Eton College;' 'Say Father Thames,' &c. 'This is useless,' he says, 'and puerile: Father Thames had no better means of knowing, than he himself!' He forgets his own address to the Nile, in Rasselas, for a purpose very similar; and he expects his readers to forget one of the most affecting passages in Virgil. Father Thames might

* Compare the following passage from another writer, on the same person and subject: "To myself, much as I admire his great and various merits, both as a critic and a writer, human nature never appears in a more humiliating form, than when I read his 'Lives of the Poets,' a performance which exhibits a more faithful, expressive, and curious picture of the author, than all the portraits attempted by his biographer; and which, in this point of view, compensates fully, by the *moral* lesson it may suggest, for the *critical* errors which it sanctions. The errors, alas! are not such as any one who has perused his imitations of Juvenal can place to the account of a bad taste, but such as had their root in weaknesses, which a noble mind would be still more unwilling to acknowledge." *See* D. Stewart's Philosophical Essay, 4to. p. 491.

well know as much of the sports of boys, as the great Father of Waters knew of the discontents of men, or the Tiber itself of the designs of Marcellus."

I would not violate that reverence due to so great a man as Dr. Johnson; but I must believe that very undeniable prejudice existed in his mind with regard to Gray, though how it arose I am at a loss to say. "Sir, he is a dull man," he said to a friend, "in every way: he is dull in writing, and dull in conception." All that I shall say to this extraordinary assertion is, that the public voice has acquitted the poet of dulness, for no quality is less easily pardoned; and as to his Letters, they abound in humour more than those of any other writer in this country. I speak of his original and authentic correspondence, of which I have had the opportunity of seeing nearly the whole that exists; for Mason has, in fact, with a timid and most unnecessary circumspection, omitted much of the wit and humour, as he himself owns, "because, from their personalities, or from some other local circumstances, they did not seem so well adapted to hit the public taste."

In the autumn of 1742 Gray composed "The Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College,"* and "The

* The Ode on Eton College was first published in folio, in 1747, and appeared again in Dodsley's Collection, Vol. II. p. 267, in which the name of the author of the Hymn to Adversity first appeared, Dodsley, Vol. IV. together with the

Hymn to Adversity;" the "Elegy in a Country Church-yard" was also commenced. We have heard the expression in the twelfth line of the first Ode,

"Ah! fields beloved in vain,"

considered as obscure, and not easily interpreted; but the Poem is written in the character of one who contemplates this life as a scene of misfortune and sorrow,

Ἄνθρωπος ἱκανὴ προφάσις εἰς τὸ δυστύχειν,

from whose fatal power the brief sunshine of youth is supposed to be exempt. The fields are "beloved" as the scene of youthful pleasures, and as affording the promise of happiness to come; but this promise never was fulfilled. Fate, which dooms man to misery, soon over-clouded these opening prospects of delight. *That* is "in vain beloved," which does not realize the expectations it held out. No fruit, but that of disappointment, has followed the blossoms of a thoughtless hope. The happiness of

Elegy, and not, as Mason says, with the three foregoing Odes, which are printed in the second volume. In Mason's selection the Hymn is called an Ode; but the title Hymn is given by the author. The motto from Æschylus is not in Dodsley. The "Ode on Spring" appeared in Dodsley's Collection, Vol. II. p. 27, under the simple title of Ode. Dr. Joseph Wharton informs us, that little or no notice was taken of this Ode on Eton College on its first appearance.

youth must be pronounced imperfect, when not succeeded by the prosperity of future life, which, according to the poet, Fate has decreed to man: for this "youthful progeny" is described as sporting on the brink of misery. The "murderous band," the ministers of misfortune, are already in ambush to seize their little victims; but a little period now of thoughtless joy is allowed to them, and then they will become a prey to those passions which are the vultures that tear the mind, and those diseases which are the painful family of death. The *fields*, therefore, which are the brief abode of youthful sports, are "in vain beloved," as having promised happiness, which, from the very nature of man, and the tenure by which he holds his being, could not be realized. Such is the interpretation which I give to the line. I shall only further observe, that the repetition thrice of the word *shade* in the opening lines is very ungraceful; and that "to chase the rolling circle's speed" seems to me both an incorrect expression, and ungrammatical circumlocution. We neither call a hoop a "circle," nor do we speak of "chasing a speed."* Some parts

* In the original manuscript the line stood,

"To chase the hoop's elusive speed;"

which no doubt was altered on account of the word *elusive*. In another manuscript of Gray's writing of the same ode, the twenty-second line is,

"Full many a *smiling* race;"

instead of *sprightly*.

of the Ode however, both in the nature of the thought, and simplicity of expression, are exquisitely beautiful; and similar praise may be given to the last stanza of the "Hymn to Adversity." It will be observed by those who read the Lyric Poetry with the careful attention which, for the high excellence, it deserves, that in the rhymes they are unusually faulty and succinct. This defect was acknowledged and lamented by Gray; for in one of his unpublished letters he says that he endeavoured to give his language that clear, concise, and harmonious structure which is suited to Lyric Poetry; but he was always impeded by the difficulty of rhyming in these short measures. He seems to have considered accuracy of rhyme of inferior consequence to propriety and beauty of expression; and that such was the difficulty of moulding our poetical language, when the rhyming sound, or consonance, recurs so frequently, that its perfect accuracy is not attainable.

Gray's residence at Cambridge was now continued, not from any partiality to the place, but partly from the scantiness of his income, which prevented his living in London; and partly no doubt for the convenience which its libraries afforded.* Original composition he almost en-

* Dr. Parr thinks that Gray's fixing his residence at the University, "in which place he adhered so steadily and long," the scantiness of his fortune, the love of books, and the easy

tirely neglected; but he was diligently employed in a regular and very constant perusal of the Greek and Latin authors; so that in six years he had read all the writers of eminence in those languages, digesting and examining their contents, marking their peculiarities, and noting their corrupt and difficult passages. Many of these learned and critical common-place books exist in the library of Pembroke College; many others I have seen, all showing very curious and accurate scholarship, particularly those on the Greek historians and orators; and all written with a delicacy and accuracy of penmanship scarcely inferior to the productions of the press. He formed for his own instruction a collection of Greek Chronology, which extended from the 30th to the 110th Olympiad, a period of 332 years, and which is chiefly designed to compare the time of all great men, their writings, and transactions. "I have read," he writes, "Pausanias and Athenæus all through,

access he had to them in many libraries, will hardly be considered as "*the sole motive.*" But where could he go? Besides, he had gradually formed out of the general society at Cambridge, an acquaintance with several persons of intelligence and knowledge, and a friendship with a few:

"Nec tu credideris *urbanæ* commoda vitæ;
Quære Nasonem—quærit et illa tamen."

The unfinished "Hymn to Ignorance" is supposed to have been written in 1742, when he returned to Cambridge from abroad.

and Æschylus again. I am now in Pindar and Lysias; for I take verse and prose together, like bread and cheese." In the margins also of his classical books, various critical notices are inserted; and I remember many conjectural emendations in his copy of Barnes' Euripides: although critical emendations of the text of the ancient authors was not that branch of scholarship in which he much indulged. To the works of Plato he paid great attention, as may be seen in the extracts from the Pembroke MSS. printed by Mr. Mathias; and Mr. Carey, in his translation of the "Birds of Aristophanes," has done justice to Gray's accurate erudition displayed in his notes on that author.*

In 1744 the difference between Walpole and Gray was, it is said, adjusted by the interference of a lady, who wished well to both, but with whose name I am not acquainted; and soon after, as a kind of propitiation, he consented to make Walpole's cat immortal, by his well-known little Poem on her death. In the third stanza, which is the most attractive of the whole, he originally wrote—

"Two *beauteous* forms were seen to glide;"

which he afterwards altered to *angel* forms: but in my opinion the former reading was far preferable,

* See Preface to "Carey's Translation of the Birds of Aristophanes," p. 20; and Notes *passim*.

as the images of "angel" and "genii" interfere with each other, and bring different associations to the mind.

About this time he became acquainted with Mr. Mason, then a scholar of St. John's College. He was also a regular correspondent with his intimate and valued friend, Dr. Wharton; and he seems to have lived on terms of some familiarity with the celebrated Conyers Middleton, whose loss he afterwards lamented. "I find a friend," he says, "so uncommon a thing, that I cannot help regretting even an old acquaintance, which is an indifferent likeness of it." He began also about this time his Poem "On the Alliance of Education and Government," but he never wrote above a hundred lines. Mason thinks that he dropped it, from finding his best thoughts forestalled by Montesquieu; but some time after he had thoughts of resuming his plan, and of dedicating his Poem by an introductory ode to Montesquieu: that great man's death, however, which happened in 1755, made him drop his design finally. But Gray's own account of the matter is far more satisfactory. When Mr. Nicholls once asked him why he never finished that incomparable fragment, he said, "*He could not;*" and then explained himself in words to this effect; "I have been used to write chiefly Lyric Poetry, in which, the Poem being short, I have accustomed myself to finish my part with care; and as this has been

a habit, I can scarcely write in any other manner. The labour of this in a long Poem would hardly be tolerable; and if accomplished, it might possibly be defective in effect, by wanting the *chiaro-oscuro*."*

In the year 1749, his "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," the finest of all his poems, received his last corrections, was communicated to Walpole, and handed about in manuscript with great applause. It was so popular, that Gray expressed his surprise at the rapidity of the sale. "It spread," said Mason, "at first on account of the affecting and serious interest of the subject; just like Hervey's Medi-

* On the following couplet I venture to make an observation:—

> "With grim delight the brood of Winter view
> A brighter day, and heav'ns of azure hue;
> *Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,*
> *And quaff the pendent vintage, as it grows.*"

Firstly, The rose is not the peculiar growth of the southern climate, and consequently its fragrance was not *new* to the invaders. *Secondly*, Gray has, in taking his picture from Livy, omitted one striking circumstance, which was perhaps of all the most important inducement for the barbaric invasion; and substituted the fragrance of flowers in its room, a pleasure little attractive to the savage race. The words of the great and picturesque writer are as follow:—"Eam gentem traditur fama dulcedine frugum, maximeque vini, *nova* tum voluptate captam, Alpes transiisse." *Lib.* V. *c.* 33. Certainly the attraction of the "*golden harvest*" would have been greater than that of "*the breathing rose.*"

tations on the Tombs.* Soon after its publication, I remember sitting with Mr. Gray in his College apartment: he expressed to me his surprise: I replied, '*Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.*' He paused awhile, and, taking his pen, wrote the line on a printed copy of it lying on the table. 'This,' said he, 'shall be its future motto.' 'Pity,' said I, 'that Dr. Young's "Night Thoughts" have pre-occupied it.' 'So,' replied he, 'indeed it is.' He had more reason to think I had hinted at the true cause of its popularity, when he found how different a reception his two Odes had met with."† Gray told Dr. Gregory, "that the Elegy owed all its popularity entirely to the subject, and that the public would have received it as well if it had been written in prose." With what justice this may be said, regarding the want of poetical taste of that day, we are ignorant; but the Elegy must be ranked among the most pathetic poems of our language. The subject was judiciously chosen, being one that attracted general interest; and it is adorned also with noble images, and fine poetical invention. I know no poem that was

* We may mention as a set-off to this general applause, and as a curiosity of criticism, the notice of it that appeared in the *Monthly*, then the leading Review of the day:—"An Elegy written in a Country Churchyard, 4to. Dodsley, seven pages. The excellence of this little piece amply compensates for its want of quantity!"

† See Mason's Life of Whitehead, p. 84.

quoted in different works so soon after its publication, as one that had taken its rank at once among the classical productions of the country; and it has ever held its station among the most popular poems in the language. How long Gray was employed on the composition of it, I do not know; but it underwent repeated and careful revision. I possess many curious variations from the printed text, taken from a copy of it in his own writing, from which a few may be selected:—

for, "Molest her ancient solitary reign,"
it stood, "Molest and pry into her ancient reign."

for, "The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,"
it stood, "For ever sleep: the breezy call of morn."

for, "Or climb his knees, the *envied* kiss to share,"
it stood, "Or climb his knees, the *coming* kiss to share."

for, "Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest;
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood,"
it stood, "Some mute inglorious Tully here may rest;
Some Cæsar, guiltless of his country's blood."

for, "For thee who mindful of the unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate,
If chance by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall enquire thy fate,"

it stood, "If chance that e'er some pensive spirit more,
By sympathizing musings here delay'd,
With vain though kind enquiries still explore
Thy ever loved haunt—this long deserted shade."

And many others. Most of them are very improved readings; and it was certainly in a happy

hour that he substituted *Milton* and *Cromwell* for *Cæsar* and *Tully*. That there are many faulty expressions in it, and even some defective construction, cannot be denied. In the line,

"Or busy housewife *ply* her evening *care*,"

is surely an expression quite unauthorized. And the following has always appeared to me to be a very flat and unpoetical expression,

"Nor you, ye Proud, *impute to these the fault.*"

Again,

"And many a holy *text* around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die."

As this construction is not, as it now stands, correct, I think that Gray originally wrote "*to teach*," but altered it afterwards, *euphoniæ gratia*, and made the grammar give way to the sound. However, I have no wish to pursue the ungrateful task of such criticism; and after all, I yield to no one in admiration of the noble spirit and thoughts which animate this beautiful production of genius.*

* Mason wonders that Gray rejected the following stanza, which came in after

"To meet the sun upon the upland lawn," &c.

but I should presume the reason to be, that the observation and language were too refined for the character of the hoary swain:

"Him have we seen the green-wood side along,
While o'er the heath we hied, our labour done,
Oft as the woodlark piped her farewell song,
With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun."

The

Gray now superintended an edition of his Works, printed at the Strawberry Hill Press, by Mr. Walpole, with designs by Mr. Richard Bentley, the only son of the great Doctor Bentley, and at that time the friend of Walpole. He was a person of various talent and acquirements, and of very eccentric conduct and character. In this edition, "The Long Story," a quaint jocose poem, which he wrote to amuse his neighbours, Lady Cobham and Miss Speed, was inserted.*

The other rejected stanza was omitted, as forming too long a parenthesis:

"There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen are showers of violets found;
The red-breast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground."

Gray never produced any lines more exquisitely graceful than these.

* Gray lived in great intimacy with these ladies, his neighbours at the Old House at Stoke. I have seen a MS. letter from Miss Speed to him, written when he was in London, during the great heat of the summer, inviting him to Stoke, and telling him that "he shall find everything *cool*, except his reception."

The mention of the Old House, the scene of the "Long Story," suggests also the anecdote in the third stanza,—

"Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
My grave lord keeper led the brawls;
The seals and maces danced before him."

On these lines, see a few observations which I printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1847. Of this house I have

In March, 1753, he lost the mother whom he had so long and affectionately loved; and he placed over her remains an inscription, which strongly marks his piety and sorrow;

BESIDE HER FRIEND AND SISTER,
HERE SLEEP THE REMAINS OF
DOROTHY GRAY,
WIDOW, THE TENDER MOTHER
OF MANY CHILDREN, ONE OF WHOM ALONE
HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO SURVIVE HER.
SHE DIED MARCH XIth MDCCLIII,
AGED LXXII.

It is usually supposed that the "Ode on the Progress of Poesy," was written in 1755. From a Letter to Walpole, it appears that it was at that time finished, except a few lines towards the end. Gray mentions his being so unfortunate as to be too late for Bentley's edition,* and talks of in-

seen drawings, and a ground plan, in the possession of Mr. Penn, the late proprietor of Stoke Park.

* In the very elegant Poem to Mr. Bentley, the last stanza was imperfect, the corner of the MS. being torn off. Mason supplied what was wanting in the words in the inverted commas:

"Enough for me, if to some feeling breast
My lines a secret sympathy '*impart;*'
And as the pleasing influence '*flows confest,*'
A sigh of soft reflection '*heaves the heart.*'"

To my taste, "heaves the heart," and "flows confest," are not in Gray's style. I think he had then in view Dryden's

serting it in Dodsley's Collection. In 1754, it is supposed that he wrote the fragment of an "Ode to Vicissitude," as it is now called: the idea, and even some of the lines, are taken from Gresset's "Epitre sur ma Convalescence:" there are some beautiful passages in it; as,

> "Till April starts and calls around
> The sleeping fragrance from the ground;
> And lightly o'er the living scene
> Scatters his freshest tenderest green."

And,

> "The meanest floweret of the vale,
> The simplest note that swells the gale,
> The common sun, the air, the skies,
> To him are opening Paradise."

And others might be quoted.

Mason, if he had had proper reverence for the talents of his friend, and could have estimated rightly his own powers, should have left the unfinished fragment as it came from the hands of the artist: *Nobis placet exemplum priscorum, qui Appelleam Venerem imperfectam maluerunt, quam integram manu extranea.* But he attempted to

Epistle to Kneller; and under the shelter of this supposition I venture on another reading:

> "Enough for me, if to some feeling breast
> My lines a secret sympathy '*convey*;'
> And as their pleasing influence '*is exprest*,'
> A sigh of soft reflection '*dies away*.'"

supply the "ivory shoulder;" and has produced some lines unusually bad, even for him; *ex. gr.*

> "He, unconscious whence the bliss,
> Feels, and owns in carols rude,
> That all the circling joys are his,
> Of dear Vicissitude."

Langhorne, in a Letter to Hannah More, writes—"I have read something that Mason has done, in finishing a half-written Ode of Gray. I find he will never get the better of that glare of colouring, that 'dazzling blaze of song,' (an expression of his own, and ridiculous enough), which disfigures half his writings." Langhorne was certainly right in his judgment, though in the mirror of his criticism he might have seen his own image, not faintly, nor unfairly, reflected.

Another Ode was also sketched, which might be called the "Liberty of Genius," though some of Gray's biographers have been pleased to call it, "The Connexion between Genius and Grandeur." The argument of it, the only part which was ever written, is as follows: "All that men of power can do for men of genius is to leave them at their liberty, compared to birds, that, when confined to a cage, do but regret the loss of their freedom in melancholy strains, and lose the luscious wildness and happy luxuriance of their notes, which used to make the woods resound."

Gray, as Walpole remarks, was indeed *in flower* these last three years. "The Bard" was conceived, and part of it communicated to Mr. Stonhewer and Dr. Wharton, in 1755; but it was for some time left unfinished. The accident, however, of seeing a blind harper, Mr. Parry, perform on the Welsh harp, again, he says, put his Ode in motion, and brought it at last to a conclusion. He submitted it to the opinion of his critical friends. He mentions a remark of Dr. Hurd upon it; and the "conceit of Mason," we are told by Walpole, "almost induced him to destroy his two beautiful and sublime Odes." In July, 1757, he took his Odes to London to be published. "I found Gray," says Horace Walpole, "in town last week: he brought his two Odes to be printed: I snatched them out of Dodsley's hands, and kept them to be the first-fruits of my press." Dodsley, however, afterwards purchased them, and Gray received forty pounds, his receipt of which is now in the possession of Mr. S. Rogers. These Odes were not very favourably received by the public; nor indeed could their very great excellence, the splendour of the imagery, the boldness of the figurative language, the varied harmony of the verse, and the exquisite finish of the diction, be appreciated but by a few. The reviewers were puzzled in their judgments. The reviewer of poetry for the "The Critical," who was

Dr. Franklin, mistook the "Æolian Lyre" for the "Æolian Harp." Mr. Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, said, that "if the Bard only recited his Ode *once* to Edward, he was sure he could not understand it." When this was told to Gray, he said, "If he had recited it twenty times, Edward would not have been a bit wiser; but that was no reason why Mr. Fox should not." Akenside criticised some of the expressions, but said much more in their praise. Warburton abused those who condemned, without being able to understand them; and Lord Lyttelton and Shenstone admired, but wished that Gray had been clearer.* One reviewer said, "The Bard" was taken from Horace, and advised the poet in future to be more original.

In the original sketch for "The Bard," the plan of the latter part was somewhat different from its present form. After reprobating Edward for his cruelties, he with prophetic spirit declares, that his cruelties shall never extinguish the noble ardour of

* "That Gray was conscious of the fault (obscurity) imputed to his Ode 'The Bard' is manifest to me from two particulars; one, his prefixing to it the motto, φῶναντα συνετοῖσιν· the other is, the explanatory notes which, with great reluctance, he added at last by the advice of his friends, *among whom was the writer of the Letter*, who drew up an analysis of the Ode for his own use, as mentioned in the Life of Gray." *See* "Remarks on the Pursuits of Literature, by John Mainwaring, B.D. Margaret Professor of Divinity," p. 19.

poetic genius in the island; and that men shall never be wanting *to celebrate true virtue, and venture in immortal strains to expose vice and infamous pleasure, and boldly to repel tyranny and oppression.* But, unhappily for this design, instances of English poets are wanting. Spenser, it is true, celebrated virtue and heroic valour, but only in allegory. The dramas of Shakespeare could hardly be cited as examples of poetry having this great end and noble purpose always in view. Milton, as Mason observes, *censured tyranny and oppression*, not in poetry, but in prose; and then there only remained Dryden, Pope, and Addison, whose writings were little suited to his purpose. Therefore towards the conclusion he was obliged to change his plan, and praise Spenser for his allegory; Shakespeare, for his power of moving the passions; and Milton, for his epic excellence. Gray told Mason, that he was well aware *of many weakly things towards the conclusion*, but hoped the end itself would do.

With regard to the form of the stanzas in which these Odes are composed, Gray considered, that that used by some of our older poets, as Cowley and his followers, was too long; and that the proper length should be governed by this rule, that the ear should be able to keep in its memory the sound of every corresponding rhyme.*

* In Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," a few of the lines have

It will not be without interest, if we turn for a moment from the direct narrative to one of Gray's Letters, which is not to be found in Mason's Memoirs of him; and ascertain what is the estimation in which he held the talents of his poetical contemporaries. Dodsley's volumes had been published a few years before, in which many of their celebrated compositions are to be found. "To begin," he writes, "with Mr. Tickell. This is not only a State poem (my ancient aversion), but a State poem on the Peace of Utrecht. If Mr. Pope had written a panegyric on it, one would hardly have read him with patience. But this is only a poor short-winded imitator of Addison,* who had himself not above three or four notes in poetry; sweet enough indeed, like those of a German flute, but such as soon tire and satiate the ear, with their frequent return: Tickell has added to this a great poverty of sense, and a string of transitions that hardly become a school-boy: however, I forgive him for the sake

no corresponding rhyme, which most likely escaped the poet in the process of composition.

* The best couplet of Tickell's best poem is in his Elegy on Addison:

> "He taught us how to live; and oh! too high
> The price of knowledge, taught us how to die."

Now compare the following:—"I have taught you, my dear flock, for above thirty years, how to live; and I will show you in a very short time how to die." *See* Anglorum Speculum, by G. Sandys, p. 903. So much for originality!

of his Ballad, which I always thought the prettiest in the world.* All the verses of Mr. Green have been printed before: there is a profusion of wit everywhere: reading would have formed his judgment, and harmonized his verse; for even his wood-notes often break out in strains of real poetry and music. The 'School-Mistress' is excellent in its kind, and masterly; and 'London' is one of those few imitations that have all the ease and spirit of the original. The same man's verses at the opening of the Garrick Theatre are far from bad. Mr. Dyer has more of poetry in his imagination than almost any of our men here, but rough and injudicious. I should range Mr. Bramston as only a step or two above Dr. King, who is as bad in my estimation as in yours. Dr. Evans is a furious madman; and 'Præ-existence' is nonsense in all her altitudes. Mr. Lyttelton is a gentle elegiac person. Mr. Nugent sure did not write his own Ode.† I

* To his fair Lucy, beginning

"Of Leicester, famed for maidens fair."

† The Ode addressed to Mr. Pulteney. The following stanza was particularly admired, and is quoted by Gibbon, in the character of Brutus;

"What though the good, the brave, the wise,
With adverse force undaunted rise,
To break th' eternal doom?
Though Cato liv'd, though Tully spoke,
Though Brutus dealt the god-like stroke,
Yet perished fated Rome."

like Mr. Whitehead's little poems (I mean the 'Ode on a Tent,' the 'Verses to Garrick,' and particularly those to C. Townshend) better than any thing I had ever seen before of him. I gladly pass over H. Brown, and the others, to come to you: you know I was of the publishing side, and thought your reasons against it—none. For though, as Mr. Chute said extremely well, the still small voice of Poetry was not made to be heard in a crowd, yet Satire will be heard, for all the audience are by nature her friends. What shall I say to Mr. Lowth, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Rolle, the Rev. Mr. Brown, Mr. Seward, &c.? If I say, 'Messieurs, this is not the thing; write prose, write sermons, write nothing at all;' they will disdain me and my advice. Mr. S. Jenyns can now and then write a good line or two, such as these :—

> 'Snatch us from all our little sorrows here,
> Calm every grief, and dry each childish tear.'

I like Mr. Aston Hervey's Fable; and an Ode, the best of all, by Mr. Mason, a new acquaintance of mine, whose Muse too seems to carry with it the

Gray's conjecture that Nugent did not write his own Ode seems confirmed, for H. Walpole says, "Mr. Nugent had hitherto the reputation of an original poet, by writing verses of his own, after he had acquired fame by an Ode which was the joint production of several others. It was addressed to Lord Bath, upon the author's change of religion; but was universally supposed to be written by Mallet, and improved by Chesterfield." *See* "Walpole's Memoirs," p. 40.

promise at least of something good to come. I was glad to see you distinguished who poor *West* was, before his charming Ode, and called it anything rather than *Pindaric.* The town is more cruel, if it don't like *Lady Mary;* and I am surprised at it.* We here are owls enough to think her Eclogues very bad; but that I did not wonder at. Our present taste is 'Sir Thomas Fitzosborne's Letters,'" &c.

In 1756 Gray left Peter-House, where he had resided about twenty years, on account of some incivilities he met with, which are mentioned in his correspondence. Mason says, that two or three young men of fortune, who lived on the same staircase, had for some time continually disturbed him with their riots; and carried their ill-behaviour so far, as frequently to awaken him at midnight. After having borne with their insults longer than might have been expected, even from a man of less warmth of temper, Mr. Gray complained to the governing part of the society; and not thinking

* One of Lady Mary's poetical expressions seems to have been in Gray's memory when he wrote,

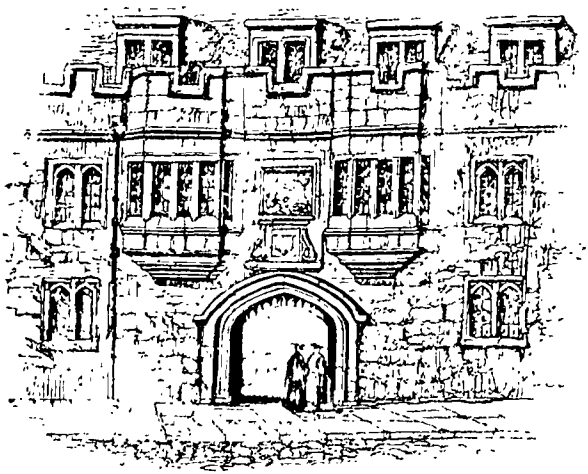
"'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dy'd
The azure flowers that blow," &c.

Compare one of Lady Mary's Town Eclogues:

"Where the tall *Jar* erects its stately pride
With antic shapes, in China's azure dyed."
The Toilette.

This stately old jar, or vase, is now removed to the Earl of Derby's, at Knowsley, from Strawberry Hill.

this remonstrance was sufficiently attended to, quitted the College. A month or two before he left, he wrote to Dr. Martin, "I beg you to bespeak me a rope ladder (for my neighbours every day make a great progress in drunkenness, which gives



ENTRANCE TO PEMBROKE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

me cause to look about me). It must be full thirty-six feet long, or a little more, but as light and manageable as may be, easy to unroll, and not likely to entangle. I never saw one, but I suppose it must have strong hooks, or something equivalent

at top, to throw over an iron bar, to be fixed in the side of my window. However, you will choose the properest form, and instruct me in the use of it."*

In 1757 Cibber died at an advanced age, and the Laureateship was offered by the Duke of Devonshire, the Lord Chamberlain, to Gray, with the privilege of holding it as a mere sinecure. This offer he respectfully declined, and mentions his reasons to Mason. "The office itself has always troubled the possessor hitherto: if he were a poor writer, by making him conspicuous; and if he were a good one, by setting him at war with the little fry of his own profession: for there are poets little enough even to annoy a poet laureate." The laurel was accepted, on Gray's refusal, by Mr. Whitehead; but Mason was not quite overlooked, for he received a compliment instead of the office. Lord John Cavendish made an apology to him, "that being in orders, he was thought less eligible than a layman."

In 1758 Gray describes himself as composing,

* Two iron bars may still be seen at the window of the chambers at Peter-House occupied by Gray, which are said to be of his placing there, for the purpose he mentions. I have been told, on the authority of Dr. Gretton, the Master of Magdalene (who was formerly of Peter-House), that "the young men of fortune" were the late Lord Egmont, then Mr. Perceval, a Mr. Forrester, a Mr. Williams, and others; that Gray complained to the Master, Dr. Law, Bishop of Carlisle; and he offended Gray by the little regard he paid to the complaint, and by his calling it "a boyish frolic."

for his own amusement, the little work which he calls "A Catalogue of the Antiquities, Houses, &c. in England and Wales," which he drew up on the blank pages of Kitchen's Atlas. After his death, it was printed in duodecimo, and distributed by Mason to his friends. In 1787 a new edition was printed for sale.*

About this period he was much employed in the study of architecture. Some of his observations appeared in Mr. Bentham's History of Ely, and in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1764 (April). A letter from Gray to Bentham is printed, which contains all the information he had afforded to the latter. This was published in consequence of a report, that the *whole* of the Treatise on Saxon, Norman, and Gothic Architecture, published in the History of Ely, was written by Gray.†

In January 1759 the British Museum was opened to the public, and Gray went to London,‡ to read

* I saw the original book at the sale of Gray's library, from which it appeared that Mason, in printing it, omitted entirely the references made by Gray to the works which he used. It had also the advantage over Mason's reprint, of having the maps of the counties.

† See Bentham's Preface to History of Ely, p. 13; and Nicholls' Literary Anecdotes, Vol. III. p. 489.

‡ For the convenience of being near the Museum, he lodged in Southampton Row; his residence at that time commanding a view of the country, and the Hampstead and Highgate hills. But in general he lived in Jermyn Street, St. James', either at Roberts' the hosier's, or at Frisby's the oilman's, towards the

and transcribe from the manuscripts collected there from the Harleian and Cottonian Libraries. His studies were directed to historical subjects, and not to poetical; though he says, "the library is so rich in Lydgate, Chaucer and the older poets, as might induce him to pursue that branch of his collections."* A folio volume of his collections were in Mason's hands, out of which one paper alone, "The Speech of Sir Thomas Wyatt before the Privy Council," was printed in Lord Orford's Miscellaneous Antiquities, but, as I find from a note in Dr. Nott's Life of Gray, very imperfectly. "I live," he says, "in the Museum, and write volumes of antiquity. I have got out of the original ledger-book of the Signet, King Richard the Third's Oath to Elizabeth, late *calling herself Queen of England*, to prevail upon her to come out of the sanctuary, with her five daughters. His grant to Lady Hastings and her son, dated six weeks after he had cut off her husband's head. A letter to his mother; another to his chancellor, to persuade his solicitor general not to marry Jane Shore, then in Ludgate by his command. Sir Thomas Wyatt's Defence at his Trial, when accused by Bishop Bonner of high

east end, on different sides of the street. In a manuscript letter of his which I have seen, he mentions *half-a-guinea* a week as the sum he used to pay for his room, and which he does not wish to exceed. His dinners he used to have from a neighbouring coffee house, probably in the Haymarket.

* From a manuscript letter.

treason. Lady Pembroke and her son's remarkable case; and several other odd things, unknown to our historians. When I come home, I have a great heap of the Conway Papers (which is a secret) to read, and make out; in short, I am up to the ears, &c."* He was, as Dr. Johnson observes, but little affected by two "Odes of Obscurity and Oblivion," written by Messrs. Colman and Lloyd, in ridicule of him and Mason. The humour of them, I think, has been much over-praised; and I agree with Warburton, who in his usual strong language calls them "two miserable buffoon Odes." Dr. Joseph Wharton says, that "the Odes of Gray were burlesqued by two men of wit and genius, who however once owned to me that they repented of the attempt."†

During Gray's residence in London, he became slightly acquainted with Mr. Stillingfleet, the naturalist, whose death took place a few weeks after his own: and he wrote, at the request of Mr. Montague, an Epitaph upon Sir W. Williams, who was killed at the siege of Belleisle. He excused himself at first, on account of the very slight acquaintance he had with the deceased: but on Mr. Montague's

* The Conway Papers, in the reign of James I. *See* Walpole's Letters, Vol. V. p. 61; and the Letters to Dr. Zouch, p. 251, 4to.

† *See* Warton's Pope, Vol. I. p. 236; and also Colman's Works, Vol. I. p. 11.

repeating his request, he yielded. In one of his letters to Mr. Stonhewer, some little time previous, I remember reading, "I hear that Sir W. Williams is going to risk his *fine Vandyk head* in the war."

In 1762 the Professorship of Modern History being vacant by the death of Mr. Turner, by the advice of his friends, Gray applied to Lord Bute for the place, but was refused, and the professorship was given to Mr. Brocket, the tutor to Sir John Lowther. "And so," says Gray, "I have made my fortune like Sir Francis Wronghead." In the summer of 1765, he took a journey to Scotland, both to improve his health, and gratify his curiosity. He went through Edinburgh and Perth, and staid some time at Slanes Castle, the residence of Lord Strathmore. Thence he took an excursion into the Highlands, crossing Perthshire by Loch Tay, and pursuing the road from Dunkeld to Inverness, as far as the pass of Killikrankie: then returned on the Stirling road to Edinburgh. "His account of his travels," says Johnson, "is, so far as it extends, curious and elegant. From his comprehension, which was ample, his curiosity extended to all the works of art, the appearances of nature, and all the monuments of past events." With the Lowlands he was much pleased; but the views of the Highlands, he said, ought to be visited every year. "The mountains are ecstatic. None but these monstrous creations of God know how to join so

much beauty to so much horror. A fig for your poets, painters, gentlemen, and clergymen, that have not been among them." * Here he made acquaintance with the author of "The Minstrel," and recommended emphatically to him the study of the writings of Dryden. He told Dr. Beattie, "that if there was any excellence in his own numbers, he had learnt it wholly from that great poet; and pressed him with earnestness to study him, as his choice of words and versification are singularly happy and harmonious." Part of the summer of 1766 he passed in a tour in Kent, and at the house of his friend Mr. Robinson, on the skirts of Barham Downs. In 1767 he again left Cambridge, and went to the north of England, on a visit to Dr. Wharton, from whose house he made excursions to the neighbouring places, particularly to Hartlepool, the situation of which he seemed much to like, and where it appears, from his journal, that he spent much of his time in conversation with the fishermen, and in inquiries respecting the names, habits, and history of the fish that frequented that part of the coast.

He had intended a second tour in Scotland, but returned to London without accomplishing his design. At Dr. Beattie's desire, a new edition of his Poems was published at Glasgow, and at the same time Dodsley was printing them in London. In both these editions, "The Long Story" was omitted,

* Manuscript.

as the plates from Bentley's designs were worn out, and Gray said "that its only use, which was to explain the plates, was gone."* Some pieces of Welch and Norwegian poetry are inserted in its place, of which the "Descent of Odin" is the most popular.

In 1768 the Professorship of Modern History again became vacant, by the death of Mr. Brocket; and the Duke of Grafton, then in power, at the request of Mr. Stonhewer, bestowed it on Gray. The Duke, on the death of the Duke of Newcastle, was elected to the Chancellorship of the University. His installation took place in the summer, and Gray returned the favour he had received, by writing his Ode on the occasion,—as beautiful a poem, it appears to me, as was ever raised by poetical fancy from such apparently inadequate materials. The fourth stanza, in which the founders of the different colleges pass in procession before us, like a stream of airy forms, is adorned with the richest fancy, and expressed in the most musical numbers and varied harmony of verse and language. There is, so far as the verse extends, no lyric poem in our language of such rich elaborate *chasing*, or glowing with such a magical splendour of colouring, and such a fine combina-

* Bentley's original drawings for the work were sold at the sale of Strawberry Hill, and in the volume was inserted a pencil drawing of the Old House, under which Horace Walpole had written, "This is the only drawing I know by Gray."

tion of beautiful images, appropriate words, and exquisitely regulated verse.

Gray told Dr. Beattie, that he considered himself bound in gratitude to the Duke of Grafton to write the Ode, and that he foresaw the abuse that would be thrown upon him for it, but did not think it worth his while to avoid it. Mr. Nicholls tells us, that, during a visit he paid to Gray, the latter offered with a good grace, what he could not have refused, if it had been asked of him—to write the Installation Ode. This, however, he considered as a sort of task, to which he submitted with great reluctance; and it was long after he first mentioned it to him, before he could prevail on himself to begin the composition. He says, "One morning, when I went to him as usual after breakfast, I knocked at his door, which he drew open, and exclaimed with a loud voice—

'Hence, avaunt! 'tis holy ground!'

I was so astonished, that I almost feared he was out of his senses; but this was the beginning of the Ode, which he had just composed."

And here, perhaps, as this is the last of Gray's three *great* Odes, it will be due both to the poet, and to his admirers, to quote a portion of what Mr. Mathias has observed on Gray's lyrical versification:—"The peculiar formation of the strophe, antistrophe, and epode, was unknown before him;

and it could only have been planned and perfected by a master-genius, who was equally skilled, by repeated study, and by transfusion into his own mind of the lyric compositions of ancient Greece, and of the higher *canzoni* of the Tuscan poetry, '*di maggior carmi e suono*,' as it is termed in the commanding energy of their language. Antecedent to 'The Progress of Poesy' and 'The Bard,' no such lyrics had appeared. There is not an ode in the English language constructed like these two compositions, with such power, such majesty, and such sweetness: with such appropriate pauses, and just cadences; with such regulated measure of the verse; with such master principles of lyric art displayed and exemplified, and at the same time with such concealment of the difficulty, which is lost by the softness and uninterrupted fluency of the lines in each stanza; with such a musical magic, that every verse of it in succession dwells on the ear, and harmonizes with that which is gone before."

When the ceremony of the Installation was over, Gray went on a tour to the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland. His old friend Dr. Wharton, who was to have been his companion in the journey, was seized with a return of an asthmatic fit on the first day, and went home. Gray pursued his solitary tour, and sent a journal of his travels regularly to his friend. This has

been printed. It is written with great simplicity and elegance, and abounds in lively and picturesque description. "He that reads his Epistolary Narrative," says Johnson, "wishes that to travel, and tell his travels, had been more of his employment."

In April 1770 he complains much of a depression of spirits, talks of an intended tour in Wales in the summer, and of meeting his friend, Dr. Wharton, at Mason's house at Aston. In July, however, he was still at Cambridge, and wrote to Dr. Beattie, complaining of illness and pains in the head, &c. This letter sent him some criticisms on the first book of "The Minstrel," which have since been printed. This tour took place in the autumn: his companion was his friend Mr. Nicholls, of Blundeston in Suffolk, a gentleman of much accomplishment, and who was admitted during the latter part of Gray's life into very intimate friendship with him. He was, I believe, the Octavius of the "Pursuits of Literature." In May 1771 he wrote to Dr. Wharton, just sketching the outline of his tour to Wales and some of the adjoining counties. This is the last letter that appears in Mason's collection. He there complains of an unusual cough, of spirits habitually low, and of the uneasiness which the thoughts of the duties which his professorship gave him, which, after having held three years, he had now a determined

resolution to resign.* He mentions also different plans of travel and amusement that he had projected. A few days after, he removed to London, where his health more and more declined. Dr. Gisborne, his physician, advised a purer air, and he went to Kensington: there in some degree he revived, and returned to Cambridge, intending to go from that place to his friend Dr. Wharton's, at Old Park. Some little time before this, his friend Mr. Robinson had seen Gray in his lodgings in Jermyn-street: he was then ill, apparently in a state of decay, and in low spirits. He expressed regret that he had done so little in literature, and lamented that at last, when he had become easy in circumstances, he had lost his health.

On the 24th of July, while at dinner in the College Hall, he was seized with an attack of gout in his stomach.† The violence of the disease baffled the power of medicine. He was attended very carefully by Professor Plumptree and Dr. Glynn. Afterwards, Mr. Stonhewer, hearing of his danger, brought Dr. Gisborne from London. In

* Gray began an inaugural "Lecture on History" in Latin, extending to about a couple of pages, which I possess. It is much corrected, and he probably had lost his facility, by long disuse, of composing in that language.

† Mr. Cary mentions in his Diary, that he conversed with the college servant who assisted to carry Gray from the hall to his chamber, when he was thus suddenly attacked. Memoir of H. Cary, by his Son, Vol. I. p. 223.

the night he was seized with convulsions, and did not always talk coherently. He died about eleven

TABLET TO GRAY, EAST-END OF STOKE CHURCH.

o'clock on the 30th, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, sensible almost to the last, quite aware of

his danger, and expressing no repining nor concern at the thoughts of leaving this world. He appointed Mr. Brown and Mr. Mason his executors; and desired to be buried near his mother, at Stoke. Mr. Brown saw his body laid in the grave; but it is singular, that no tomb or monument has been erected to his memory: a small stone, inserted lately in the wall of the church, is the only memorial which indicates the spot where the Poet's dust reposes.

Of Gray's person, his biographer has given no account, and Lord Orford has just mentioned it.* There is a portrait of him at Pembroke College, by Wilson, done after his death, from recollection, which has been engraved both for Mason's, and Mr. Mathias' edition. There is also an *etching* by Doughty, from a drawing by Mr. Mason; and there is one also copied by Mr. Henry Laws, a pupil of Bartolozzi: it is perhaps the most correct likeness of all. Dr. Turner, the late Master of Pembroke College, and Dean of Norwich, had two profile heads of Gray, taken by a Mr. Mapletoft, a Fellow of that college, one of which, he said, conveyed a strong resemblance; but the *relievo*

* *See* Walpoliana, Vol. I. p. 95. I must however observe, that this book is to be received with great caution; for I have no doubt that the editor, Mr. Pinkerton, inserted throughout many of his own opinions, and much of his own writing.

on his monument in Westminster Abbey is the one most to be relied on, and from which Mr. Behnes very judiciously formed the bust which is now placed in the Upper School-room at Eton.

Though warmly attached to a few, Gray was very fastidious in the choice of his society; and in his later years he was afflicted by such painful and debilitating disorders, as to confine him in a great measure to the solitude of his own apartments, or to the occasional visits of a few intimate friends. He mentions in one of his later letters, which I have had the opportunity of seeing, that he could not see to read at all with one eye; and that he had the *muscæ volitantes* so before the other, that, if he lived, he had the chance of being quite blind. The following description of him, about this period of his life, has been given from personal recollection:—"From his earliest, almost to his latest residence at Cambridge, its usages, its studies, its principal members were the theme of his persevering raillery; neither could all the pride they felt in the presence of such an inmate prevent on every occasion a spirit of retaliation. Among the older and more dignified members of that body, out of the narrow circle (and very narrow that circle was) of his resident academical friends, he was not, if the truth must be spoken, regarded with great personal respect. The primness and pre-

cision of his deportment, the nice adjustment of every part of his dress, when he came abroad,

'Candentesque comæ, et splendentis gratia vestis,'

excited many a smile, and produced many a witticism.* Nay, even a stanza in 'Beattie's Minstrel,' as it stood in the first edition, has been supposed to have undergone a revision, prompted by the tenderness of friendship, in consequence of the strong, though undesigned resemblance which it struck out of the Cambridge Bard:

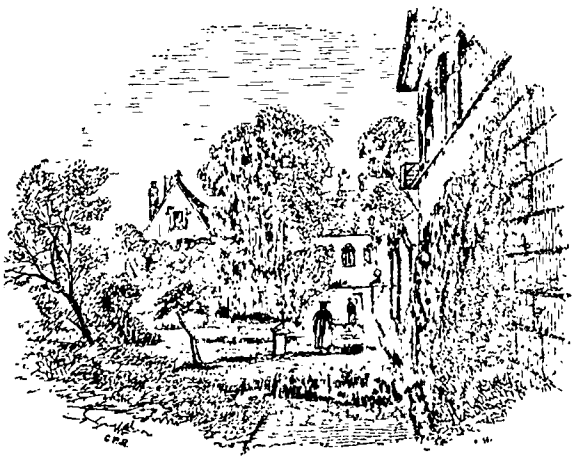
'Fret not thyself, thou man of modern song,
Nor violate the plaster of thy hair;
Nor to that dainty coat do aught of wrong;
Else how may'st thou to Cæsar's hall repair?
For sure no damaged coat may enter there,' &c.

In his later days, however, and when he seldom appeared in public, due homage was paid to the author of 'The Bard' by the younger members of the University, which deserves to be commemorated. Whenever Mr. Gray appeared upon the Walks, intelligence ran from College to College; and the tables in the different Halls, if it happened to be the hour of dinner, were thinned, by the desertion of young men thronging to behold him."†

* Among those remembered was an epigram of Smart's, and a repartee of a fruit-woman at a coffee-house.

† From the Recollections of Dr. Whitaker, the historian of Craven.

The truth is, though Gray remained always at Cambridge, he appeared so little in public, that Mr. Mathias was there for a whole year without ever having had the opportunity of seeing him. The late Lord St. Helens said, that when he came to Cambridge in 1770, having had a letter of in-



RIDLEY'S WALK, PEMBROKE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

troduction to Gray, he received a visit from him. He was accompanied by Dr. Gisborne, Mr. Stonhewer, and Mr. Palgrave, and they *walked in Indian file.* When they withdrew, every College-man took off his cap as they passed, a consider-

able number being assembled in the quadrangle to see Mr. Gray, who was seldom seen. I asked, he added, Mr. Gray, to the great dismay of his companions, "What he thought of 'Garrick's Jubilee Ode' just published?" He answered, "I am easily pleased."

The political opinions of Gray, Walpole said he never understood. Sometimes he seemed inclined to the side of authority, and sometimes to that of the people. "I remember in one of his manuscript letters his saying, 'You know how much I dislike the spirit of trade,' which was then rapidly increasing." In conversation, Walpole says, "that Gray was so circumspect in his usual language, that it seemed unnatural, though only pure English." And in a letter to George Montague, he writes, "I agree with you most absolutely in your opinion about Gray: he is the worst company in the world, from a melancholy turn, from living reclusely, and from a little too much dignity: he never converses easily; all his words are measured and chosen, and formed into sentences." And again; "My Lady Ailesbury has been much diverted, and so will you too. Gray is in their neighbourhood. My Lady Carlisle says, *He is extremely like me in his manner.* They went on a party to dine on a cold loaf, and passed the day. Lady A. protests he never opened his lips but once, and then only said, 'Yes, my lady, I believe

so.'" Mr. Nicholls; who made a tour with him, as has been mentioned, the year before his death, says, "That with the society at Malvern, he had neither inclination to mix much in conversation, nor much facility, had he been willing. This arose partly from natural reserve, and which is called *shyness*; and partly from having lived retired in the University during so great a part of his life; where he had lost, as he told me himself, *the versatility of his mind.*" This account is probably true enough, as regards mixed company and general society; but when it was worth his while to talk—when his companion was a man of knowledge, and his subject one of interest, we shall find a very different relation of his conversational habits. "Gray's letters," says Dr. Beattie, "very much resemble what his conversation was: he had none of the airs either of a scholar or a poet; and though on these, and on all other subjects, he spoke to me with the utmost freedom, and without any reserve, he was in general company much more silent than one could have wished." He writes to Sir W. Forbes; "I am sorry you did not see Mr. Gray on his return; you would have been much pleased with him. Setting aside his merit as a poet (which, however, is greater in my opinion than any of his contemporaries can boast, in this or any other nation), I find him possessed of the most exact taste, the soundest judgment,

and the most extensive learning. *He is happy in a singular facility of expression.* His composition abounds with original observations, delivered in no appearance of sententious formality, and seeming to arise spontaneously, without study or premeditation. I passed two days with him at Glammis, and found him as easy in his manner, and as communicative and frank as I could have wished." *

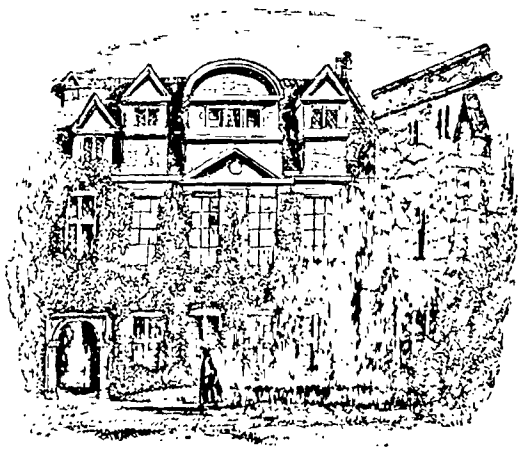
Soon after Gray's death, a character of him was drawn up and printed by the Rev. Mr. Temple, of whom the reader will find some account in the correspondence which has been lately published between Gray and Mr. Nicholls. This account was adopted both by Mr. Mason and Dr. Johnson, as impartial and accurate; and Boswell says, that Mr. Temple knew Gray well. The following is an extract from it:—"Perhaps Mr. Gray was the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and proper parts of science, and that not superficially, but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil; had read all the original histories of England, France, and Italy; was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, politics, made a principal part of his study. Voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusement; and he

* *See* Life of Beattie, by Sir W. Forbes, Vol. II. p. 321.

had a fine taste in prints, paintings, architecture, and *gardening.** With such a fund of knowledge, his conversation must have been equally instructive and entertaining. There is no character without some speck or imperfection; and I think the greatest defect in his was, an affectation of delicacy, or rather effeminacy, and a visible fastidiousness, or contempt and disdain of his inferiors in science. He had also in some degree that weakness, which disgusted Voltaire so much in Congreve. Though he seemed to value others chiefly according to the progress they had made in knowledge, yet he would rather not be considered merely as a man of letters; and though without birth, fortune, or station, his desire was to be looked upon as that of a private independent gentleman, who read for his amusement," &c.

* This is very incorrect. Gray always disclaimed any skill in gardening, and held it in little estimation, declaring himself only charmed with the wilder parts of unadorned nature. *See also* "Mason's English Garden," Book III. 25. It was mountain scenery in which he delighted. I remember in one of his MS. Letters, after he had returned from the Highlands of Scotland, his burst of delight, and saying—"One ought to go there every year." Sir James Mackintosh observed, in a letter to a friend, "In the beautiful scenery of Bolton Abbey, where I have been since I began this note, I am struck by the recollection of a sort of merit in Gray, which is not generally observed; that he was the first discoverer of the beauties of nature in England, and has marked out the course of every picturesque journey that can be made in it."

Towards the end of the year 1769, Mr. Nicholls introduced Mr. de Bonstetten, then a youth, in a letter from Bath, to Gray's notice. He resided at Cambridge some months, during which time he enjoyed daily the society of Gray, who appears to



INNER QUADRANGLE, PEMBROKE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.
(GRAY'S ROOM.)

have been quite captivated by the disposition and manners of the young foreigner. Sixty years after this time, and just before his death, Bonstetten printed a little volume of his Recollections, and the following very curious account of Gray is to be

found in it: "Eighteen years before my residence at Nyon, I passed some months at Cambridge with the celebrated poet Gray, in almost as much intimacy as I afterwards did with Mathison; only with this difference, that Gray was thirty years older, and Mathison sixteen years younger. My gravity, my love for English poetry, which I read with Gray, had so subdued and softened him (*subjugué*), that the difference of our age was no longer felt. I lodged at Cambridge, at a coffee-house close to Pembroke Hall. Gray lived there, buried in a kind of cloister, which the fifteenth century had not removed. The town of Cambridge, with its solitary colleges, was nothing else than an assemblage of monasteries, where the mathematics and some sciences took the form and habit of the theology of the middle ages; handsome conventional buildings, with long and silent corridors; solitary figures in black gowns; young noblemen metamorphosed into monks, with square caps; everywhere one was reminded of monks, by the side of the glory of Newton. No virtuous female cheered and amused the lives of these bookworms in human form; but knowledge sometimes flourished in the deserts of the heart. Such was Cambridge, as I saw it in 1769. What a contrast between the life of Gray at Cambridge, and that of Mr. Mathison at Nyon. Gray, in condemning himself to live at Cambridge, forgot that the genius

of the poet languishes, when the feelings of the heart are dried up. The poetic genius was so extinguished in the gloomy abode at Cambridge, that *the remembrance of his poetry was odious to him.* He never permitted me to speak to him about it. When I repeated some of his lines, he was as silent as an obstinate child. 'Why don't you answer me?' I sometimes said; but not a word could I get from his lips. I saw him every evening from five o'clock till twelve: we read together Shakespeare, whom he worshipped, and Dryden, and Pope, and Milton, &c.; and our friendly conversations seemed never to be exhausted. I related to Gray the history of my life, and of my country; but his life was a closed book to me: he never spoke to me of himself. With Gray, between the present and the past, there was an impassable gulf: when I endeavoured to approach it, dark clouds and shadows covered it. I believe that Gray was never in love; this is the solution of the enigma: thence resulted a misery of heart, which contrasted strongly with his brilliant imagination, and which was the torment, instead of proving the happiness, of his life. Gray had at once gaiety in his mind, and melancholy in his character; but this melancholy was the unsatisfied demand of a repressed sensibility, existing under the arctic pole of a Cambridge life," &c.

This lively and dramatic sketch contains some

truth, but the colouring of the whole is exaggerated. That Gray should dislike to converse about his poetry, might possibly arise from the conviction, that a young foreigner, who was not able to write a sentence of English correctly, could not appreciate it; and there were circumstances also connected with Gray's early life, which were no doubt painful to him to recollect; and some too, to which he obscurely alludes in his letters, deeply affected him, that were occasioned by the misbehaviour and misfortune of one, whom he had called his friend. Something perhaps might have been misunderstood by the young foreigner, something exaggerated in his statement, and not carefully remembered, after an interval of many years. It must also be remarked, that Gray's constitution was enfeebled and impaired by constant attacks of hereditary gout, and other painful complaints, destroying his ease, and disordering his frame. He speaks constantly of the sleepless night and feverish morning, and seems seldom to have been free from pain, debility, and disease. Expressions similar to the following may be found in many passages in his different journals:—"*Insomnia crebra*, atque *expergiscenti* surdus quidem doloris sensus: frequens etiam in regione sterni oppressio, et cardialgia gravis, fere sempiterna." But there are also many passages in his letters, opening to our view habitual lowness of spirits, or a mental

uneasiness, expressing itself in such language as the following:—"I should like to be like ——, and think that everything turns out for the best in the world; but it won't do. I am stupid and low-spirited; but some day or other all this must come to a conclusion." *

It remains now to speak of an intended publication in English literature, mentioned by Gray in an advertisement to the imitation of the Welsh Odes, which was, a "History of English Poetry." It appears that Warburton had communicated to Mason a paper of Pope's, containing the first sketch for a work of that nature, and which was printed in "Ruffhead's Life of Pope." "Milton," says Dryden, "was the paternal son of Spenser, and Waller of Fairfax; for we have our lineal descendants and children, as well as other families." On this principle, Pope drew up his little catalogue of the English poets, and Gray was so much pleased with the method of arrangement which Pope had struck out, that, on Mason's agreeing to publish

* Partly from the "Explanations of the late Archdeacon Oldershaw," partly from his unpublished correspondence, I believe that I am particularly acquainted with those circumstances that spread a considerable gloom over Gray's mind, and perhaps permanently affected his spirits in the manner in which Mr. Bonstetten has described, but which it is quite useless to draw from the obscurity in which they have been placed, especially as Gray's own character is totally unaffected by them.

them, he revised and considerably enlarged the plan. He meant in the introduction to ascertain the origin of rhyme; to give specimens of the Provencal, Scaldic, British, and Saxon poetry; and when the different sources of English poetry were *ascertained*, the history was to commence with the school of Chaucer. It was for this purpose that he wrote his Welsh and Norwegian Odes, and made those curious and elaborate enquiries into the origin of rhyme and metre, which have been subsequently printed by Mr. Mathias. He also transcribed many passages from Lydgate, whose merits he considered had been undervalued; and I possess a character of Samuel Daniel, undoubtedly intended by him for this work, drawn up with great care, and with a critical examination of his poetical beauties and defects.

About this time however he found that Mr. Thomas Warton was engaged in a similar undertaking; and, fatigued with the extent of his plan, he sent it to him, of whose abilities, from his Observations on Spenser, he entertained a high opinion.* It is well known that Warton did not adopt that kind of arrangement which Pope and Gray had recommended, and he gave his reasons for departing from it in the Preface to his History.

* Gray and Mason first detected the impostures of Chatterton. *See* Archæological Epistle to Dean Milles, Stanza XI. (This Poem was Mason's writing.)

Gray died some years before Warton's first volume appeared.

From poetry to music is a natural transition; and therefore it may be observed, that Gray's taste in music was excellent, and formed on the study of the old Italian masters, who flourished about the time of Pergolesi, as Marcello, Leo, and Palestrina. He performed on the harpsichord, and sang to his own accompaniment with great taste and feeling. Mr. Cole says, Gray latterly played on the piano-forte, and sang to *him*, but not without solicitation.*

In his later years he applied himself to Gothic and Saxon architecture, with such industry and sagacity, that he could at first sight pronounce on the precise time when any particular part of our cathedrals was erected. For this purpose, he trusted less to written accounts and works, than to the internal evidence of the buildings themselves. He invented also several terms of art, the better to express his meaning on this subject. Of heraldry,

* "He has frequently played upon the harpsichord, and sang to it freely, as frequently latterly on the forte-piano. His forte-piano was a present to him from his friend Mr. Stonhewer, which at his death he bequeathed to him again. Cole's MS. Notes. Gray's friend, Mr. Nicholls, was very musical. Mr. Uvedale Price says "that Gray was not partial to the music of Handel; but used to speak with praise of that chorus in the Oratorio of Jephthah, 'No more to Ammon's God and king.'" *See* Essays on the Picturesque, Vol. II. p. 191.

to which he applied as a preparatory science, he was a considerable master, and left behind him many curious genealogical papers. He told Mr. Nicholls, that he was deeply read in Dugdale, Hearne, Spelman, and others of that class; and that he took as much delight in that study, as ever he did in any other. When Mr. Nicholls expressed his surprise to Gray at the extent of his reading; he said, "Why should you be surprised; for I do nothing else." He said, "He knew from experience how much might be done by a person who did not fling away his time on middling and inferior authors, and read with method. He thought that the abundance of dictionaries of different kinds was a bad symptom for the literature of the age, because real and profound learning is never derived from such sources, but drawn at the fountain-head; and they who are content to pick up the scanty and superficial information which can be acquired by such means, have neither the spirit nor the industry to *study a subject through*, in the original authors: nor indeed have they any further demands on literature, than for a sufficient supply to satisfy their vanity."

As the life of Gray advanced, it was still marked by the same studious and secluded habits; but he appears gradually to have left his classical studies for a more extended circle of reading, including history, antiquities, voyages, and travels; and in

many of the books in his library, as Fabian's Chronicles, Clarendon, and others, the extreme attention with which he read is seen by his various and careful annotations, and by the margins being filled with illustrations and corrections drawn from State Papers, and other original documents. The latest period of his life seems to have been very much occupied in attention to natural history in all its varied branches, both in the study of books, and in the diligent observation of nature. He kept every year a pocket diary or journal, entering daily observations on the state of the weather, on the prevailing currents of wind, or the variations of the thermometer, with as much attention and minuteness as would be found in a nautical almanack. Other columns contained a floral calendar, a list of plants, including trees and flowers, in the order in which they awoke to life in the spring, or flowered in the summer months, or decayed with the dying year; and this was done with a patience and minuteness almost incredible. Yet it formed only one portion of the labour bestowed on these inquiries. In his journals, of which I have met with several, are accounts of all the birds, fish, insects, animals, and plants, seen by him in different localities in his travels, for the most part described in Latin, and all arranged according to the systematic order of Linnæus, and that with such laborious distinction, that (as an

instance) the plants he saw when staying with Mr. Robinson at Denton, in Kent, are divided into the hill, field, and those seen by the road-side, or on old walls and ruins. When at Hartlepool, near Durham, he records his conversation with the fishermen on some species of fish which he regarded as doubtful, and they are all elaborately described.

The same kind of botanical register he kept at Old Park, and wherever he went; and all catalogues of exhibitions and museums of natural history inspected by him were noted, generally with reference to the nomenclature of Linnæus. But the greatest monument of his talent and knowledge is the interleaved copy of the French edition of Linnæus' "Systema Naturæ," which work, we are told, during the latter part of his life, was always lying on his table. It is entirely filled both in the margins and in interlineations of the printed text, and also in the blank leaves inserted, with additions to Linnæus from other works of travel or science, or with alterations and amendments of his own, especially noting where the fauna of Sweden differed from that of England. It is also adorned and illustrated with designs and figures of insects and birds, or portions of them, drawn with accuracy and elegance, both in the natural size and magnified.

This book proves that he had a very profound knowledge of the *whole* system of nature, as

arranged by the great Swedish naturalist; and I have also seen letters from him to different friends, who had sent him some natural productions, as rare birds, fish, &c. giving copious and detailed information on the subject. Occasionally he altered the Latinity of Linnæus,* and sometimes amused himself in giving the technical descriptions in a metrical form. The following lines express the genuine character of the fifth order of insects, and are formed chiefly from the language of the Swedish naturalist.

HYMENOPTERA.

At vitreas alas, jaculumque Hymenoptera caudæ
Fœmineo data tela gregi, maribusque negata.
Telum abdit spirale *Cynips*, morsuque minatur:
Maxillas *Tenthredo* movet, serramque bivalvem.
Ichneumon gracili triplex abdomine telum.
Haurit *Apis* lingua incurva quod vindicat ense.
Sphex alam expandit lævem, gladiumque recondit.
Alæ ruga notat *Vespam*, caudæque venenum.
Squamula *Formicam* tergi, telumque pedestrem.
Dum minor alata volitat cum conjuge conjux
Mutilla impennis, sed cauda spicula vibrat.

HEMIPTERA.

Dimidiam rostrata gerunt Hemiptera crustam;
Fœmina serpit humi interdum, volat æthere conjux:
Rostro *Nepa* rapax pollet, Chelisque; *Cicada*
Remigio alarum et rostrato pectore saltat:
Tela *Cimex* inflexa gerit, cruce complicat alas:

* See instances of this published in Mr. Mathias' edition of Gray's Works.

Notonecta crucem quoque fert, remosque *pedales*
Cornua *Aphis* caudæ et rostrum; sæpe erigit alas:
Deprimit has *Chermes*, dum saltat, pectore gibbo.
Coccus iners caudæ setas, volitante marito.
Thrips alas angusta gerit, caudamque recurvam.

LEPIDOPTERA.

Squamam alæ, linguæ spiram Lepidoptera jactant;
Papilio clavam et squamosas subrigit alas.
Prismaticas *Sphinx* antennas, medioque tumentes;
At conicas gravis extendit sub nocte *Phalæna*.

But Gray's labours are often seen extending even beyond what we must conceive to be the verge of rational inquiry, considering the little advantage to be derived from such long and laborious exertions. I possess, among several others of his books, his copy of "*Voyage de Bergeron;*" and all through this book, which is a thick quarto volume, he has followed the author in his account of the names and succession of the Persian, Tartar, and Chinese dynasties; sometimes illustrating, sometimes enlarging his account with the same apparent pains which he had previously taken in his classical and poetical studies. As one example of this minute and extended curiosity, Bergeron says, speaking of Bagdo, "*second fils de Hoccato-Cham, il fut noyé avec un nombre des siens.*" Gray first adds, "Bagdo was nephew to Oglai. Bergeron is wrong: the drowning took place in 1235, and Bagdo Khan was certainly alive many years after: he died in 1256." Again, Bergeron says, "*Mango-Cham fut*

noyé:" Gray adds in the margin, "Muncaça, or Mango Khan, was not drowned, but in reality slain in China at the siege of Ho-chew in 1256." Another traveller had said, "The name of this king was *Abassidus-Ahmed:*" Gray adds, "Ahmed Emir al Mumenin; this Abassid, surnamed Al-Nasor, was fifty-second khaliff, but he came not to the throne till A.D. 1179; so that the khaliff then reigning must be Hassan-Al-Moothaday, his predecessor." He corrects another statement of the traveller Rubriques thus; "It was not Bates-Khan, but Jarmagan, Ogtai's general, who defeated Cai Khosru the Second, surnamed Gaiatheddin, the eighth Selginmid sultan of Asia Minor in 1342." And in this manner he has filled the margins of a thick quarto volume of Oriental travels with very elaborate annotations, and corrections of the different authors, all written in the most careful and delicate hand; and has followed the author through the whole of this elaborate work, employed on subjects so utterly remote from all common curiosity and interest, with the same critical and patient investigation, as if his learning was particularly directed in that channel, or that he was meditating a work on similar subjects. His copy of "*Liste des Insectes*," which I also possess, is annotated on in a similar way; and the margin of his copy of the "Historia Animalium" of Aristotle, in the edition of Sylburgius, is crowded with notes and explana-

tions. His copy of "Entinck's London and its Environs," in six volumes, 8vo. is full of remarks and corrections on the architecture, sculpture, &c. of the different buildings in the Metropolis; and there is another copy of the same work in the library of Nuneham, equally full of his observations, from which Mr. Pennant was allowed to take materials for his work.

One most important branch of study alone passed unnoticed by him, or at least was only casually pursued; I mean that of *theology:* and it is singular, that in one of his later letters, I found Mason writing to him, "I wish I could get you to read Jeremy Taylor, the Shakespeare of English prose." Spenser, Shakespeare, and Dryden were his favourite poets; and he also thought highly of Pope. He placed Lord Clarendon at the head of our historians; and, for style, he thought that of Conyers Middleton much to be approved. Of the "Clarissa" of Richardson, he spoke in the highest terms; he said, "He knew no instance of a tale so well told;" and mentioned with the highest commendation the dramatic propriety and consistency of the character, preserved from the beginning to the end, in all situations and circumstances. He thought Goldsmith a genuine poet: Cibber's comedies he considered excellent; and he said that "Vanbrugh's plays were much better than his architecture."

His French reading was extensive: he esteemed

very highly the dramas of Voltaire and the *Émile* of Rousseau; but his knowledge of Italian literature did not extend beyond the writers of the first class; for Mr. Mathias says that Gray had never read Filicaia, Guidi, and the other lyrical poets highly esteemed in Italy. In his correspondence, printed and manuscript, many other literary opinions and judgments will be found, both on the older authors, and on the writings of his contemporaries.

But it is time that this narrative should draw to a close: and as Gray's acquirements, however extensive, must be considered secondary to his fine poetical talents, I cannot, I think, form a better conclusion, than by giving a sketch of the latter, as drawn by Sir James Mackintosh, with his usual solidity of judgment and delicacy of taste:— "Gray," he writes, following some observations on the merits of Goldsmith, "was a poet of a far higher order, and of almost an opposite kind of merit. Of all English poets, he was the most finished artist. He attained the highest degree of splendour of which poetical style seems to be capable. If Virgil and his scholar Racine may be allowed to have united so much more ease with their elegance, no other poet approaches Gray in this kind of excellence. The degree of political invention diffused over such a style, the abundance of taste and of fancy necessary to produce it, and the art with

which the offensive boldness of imagery is polished away, are not, indeed, always perceptible to the common reader, nor do they convey to my mind the same species of gratification, which is felt from the perusal of those poems, which seem to be the unpremeditated effusions of enthusiasm. But to the eye of the critic, and more especially to the artist, they afford a new kind of pleasure, not incompatible with a distinct perception of the art employed, and somewhat similar to the grand emotions excited by the reflection of the skill and toil exerted on the construction of a magnificent palace. They can only be classed among the secondary pleasures of poetry, but they can never exist without a great degree of its higher excellencies. Almost all his poetry was lyrical; that species, which, issuing from a mind in the highest state of excitement, requires an intensity of feeling, which, for a long composition, the genius of no poet could support. Those who complained of its brevity and rapidity, only confessed their own inability to follow the movements of poetical inspiration.* Of the two grand

* In another place, this same writer observes, "The obscurity of the ode on 'The Progress of Poetry' arises from the variety of the subjects, the rapidity of the transitions, the boldness of the imagery, and the splendour of the language. To those who are incapable of that intense attention, which the higher order of poetry requires, and which poetical sensibility always produces, there is no obscurity. In 'The Bard,' some of these causes of obscurity are lessened: it is more

attributes of the Ode, Dryden has displayed the enthusiasm—Gray exhibited the magnificence. He is also the only modern English writer, whose Latin verses deserve general notice; but we must lament that such difficult trifles had diverted his genius from its natural objects.*

"In his letters has been shown the descriptive power of the poet; and in new combinations of generally familiar words, which he seems to have caught from Madame de Sévigné (though it must be said he was somewhat quaint), he was eminently happy. It may be added, that he deserves the comparatively trifling praise of having been the most learned poet since Milton."†

impassioned, and less magnificent; but it has more brevity and abruptness. It is a lyric drama, and this structure is a new source of obscurity."

* I don't quite catch the writer's meaning here, for all Gray's Latin verses were written when he was young; and, from what I have seen, it appears to me, that in his later life he had lost his facility, and perhaps some of his correctness, in compositions in that language, whether in prose or verse. However, occasionally to compose in a language that we understand, and that we love, is a natural desire; and we may imitate, without the hope of competing with the great masters of Latin song. And such were the rational amusements, in their later years, of two remarkable persons of the present age, who united the character of the scholar and the statesman, and who preserved the love of their early studies, amidst the more onerous duties and employments of their riper years; I mean, the Marquis of Wellesley, and Lord Grenville.

† *See* "Life of Sir James Mackintosh," Vol. II. p. 172.

To what Sir James Mackintosh has observed on Gray's letters and their merits, I may add, that Cowper (whose own letters in *another* style are matchless) says, "I once thought Swift's letters the best that could be written, but I like Gray's better. His humour, or his wit, or whatever it is to be called, is never ill-natured or offensive, yet I think equally poignant with the Dean's."* And yet Mr. Mason did not do justice to his friend, nor perform, according to my opinion, the duties of an editor with the required fidelity. There is not a single letter of Gray's, in the whole volume of Mr. Mason's, printed without alteration of some kind, omission, or transposition. Almost all his humorous anecdotes, and lively stories, and amusing accounts of public officers and political characters are omitted, and *passages of Mason's own composition are substituted in the place.* This I discovered unexpectedly, when the "Wharton Correspondence" was entrusted to my care; and I have found the same system pursued through the other letters which have since come into my hands, containing those to Dr. Brown, and in the whole volume of correspondence between Gray and Mason himself. That he was not himself satisfied with his method of systematic alteration, may be seen in a letter of his to Mr. Nicholls, which I lately printed:—"Mr.

* *See* "Cowper's Letters," by Hayley, Vol. II. p. 231, 4to.

Mason returns many thanks to Mr. Nicholls, for the use he has permitted him to make of these letters. He will find that much *liberty has been taken* in transposing parts of them for the press, and will see the reason for it. It were, however, to be wished, that the originals might be so disposed of as not to impeach the editor's fidelity, but that he leaves to Mr. Nicholls' discretion; for people of common sense will think the liberty he has used as very venial." Mr. Nicholls, however, did not approve Mason's reasons, nor comply with his request of destroying the original correspondence, which has since been printed. When the Wharton manuscript was returned, it was found that Mason had not only erased many passages, but had also cut others out of the volume. In the letters to Dr. Brown innumerable are the various parts completely erased by him; and he has treated in the same way the most curious and interesting of all Gray's correspondence, that with himself. It has been said, "that Mason repaid Gray's long friendship and faithful services with an edition of his works, so judiciously selected and elegantly arranged, as to put to shame any subsequent attempt of the same nature." He who delivered this opinion had every reason to be confident of its justness, for he had not seen, nor did he know the nature of any of the original materials; and as relates to the *elegance* with which the biographical

narrative is conducted, and the judiciousness with which the outline is drawn, we are quite willing to allow the largest share of praise; but this same elegance need not have been purchased at the expense of truth; and we naturally expect, that the sacred deposit of the remains of deceased persons, in the hands of a friend, should be treated with a conscientious delicacy due to its worth. Besides, in his aim at elegance, Mason gave up the power of representing the full value of Gray's merits as a letter writer. Of the whole correspondence with Mr. Nicholls, no more than five letters are selected, not more than a quarter of those written to Dr. Wharton, and very small parts of those that passed between Dr. Brown and himself. What would have been said, had the Sévigné or Walpole correspondence been treated in the same manner?*

We now conclude with the following interesting letter from the late Mr. Jacob Bryant, containing his recollections of Gray when he was at Eton with him, and which supplies several particulars overlooked by Mason, which all admirers of Gray must be grateful to receive:—

* The Quarterly Reviewer, Dr. Whitaker, mentions *the faults*, arising principally from want of erudition, that are to be found in Mason's volume. The following is a curious specimen: Gray's line—

"Et modo rata *mala* vellere *poma* manu."

Mason's note—'So the original: there is a peculiar obscurity in the line, arising from the synonyms *mala* and *poma*.'!!!

"DEAR SIR,*—As the memory of Mr. Gray is with you an article of much regard, and as every thing that can conduce to the knowledge of his life and character must be acceptable, I will take the liberty to lay before you a portion of intelligence, which I believe has never been fully given, and which can now only be afforded by myself. In this narrative will be included an answer to that question which you were pleased to desire me to explain.

"My first acquaintance with Mr. Gray and his friend, Mr. Horatio Walpole (the late Lord Orford), was at the latter end of the year 1729, at which time I came first to Eton. It was my fortune to be placed in the fourth form, nearly at the same distance from each—the former being about four or five boys below, and Mr. Walpole as many above me. Hence I was well acquainted with them both, but not with that intimacy which subsisted between these two.

"At this early time of which I speak, Mr. Gray was in mourning for his uncle, Mr. Antrobus, who had been an assistant at Eton, and, after his resignation, lived and died there. I remember he made an elegant little figure in his sable dress, for he had a very good complexion and fine hair, and appeared to much advantage among the boys who were

* It does not appear to whom this letter was addressed, but probably to some person who intended to publish memoirs of the poet.

near him in the school, and who were more rough and rude. Indeed, both Mr. Gray and his friend were looked upon as too delicate, upon which account they had few associates, and never engaged in any exercise, nor partook of any boyish amusement. Hence they seldom were in the fields, at least they took only a distant view of those who pursued their different diversions. Some, therefore, who were severe, treated them as feminine characters, on account of their too great delicacy, and sometimes a too fastidious behaviour. Mr. Walpole long time afterwards used to say, that *Gray was never a boy.* This was allowed by many who remembered him, but in an acceptation very different from that which his noble friend intended. These circumstances are alluded to by the author of the 'Pursuits of Literature,' when in his book he speaks of 'master-misses' being offended. Mr. Gray was so averse to all rough exercise, that I am confident he was never on horseback.

"They were both good scholars; and though I do not remember Mr. Gray being particularly noticed either by the master, or by his compeers, yet his compositions were very good. One, I recollect, was upon the old story of words freezing in northern air, which he made when he was rather low in the fifth form: but I can only call to mind part of two verses upon the consequences of the supposed thaw:—

'pluviæque loquaces
Descendere jugis, et garrulus ingruit imber.'

"From this fragment a judgment may be formed of his early taste and proficiency.

"At the same early time of life he was acquainted with Mr. West, who was son to the chancellor of that name in Ireland. I also knew him well, and looked upon him as an extraordinary genius. Two specimens of his compositions were preserved by me, and have since been printed. There also survives a curious parody upon the fourth ode of the fourth book of Horace, which abounds with much good humour, very happily expressed. He was superior to Mr. Gray in learning, and to every body near him. In a letter of Mr. Gray to him, mention is made of versifying when asleep, for which, he says, Mr. West was once famous. This is, I believe, founded in truth; for I remember some who were of the same house mentioning that he often composed in his dormant state, and that he wrote down in the morning what he had conceived in the night. He was, like his friend, quite faultless in respect to morals and behaviour, and, like many great geniuses, often very eccentric and absent. One of his friends, who partook of the same room, told me, that West, when at night composing, would come in a thoughtful mood to him at his table, and carefully snuff his candle, and then return quite satisfied to his own dim taper, which he left unrepaired. This, he said,

he had often experienced. In the seventh letter to Mr. Gray, he encloses to him a most noble and pathetic composition, which some good judges have thought hardly ever equalled. Though he lived four or five years afterwards, yet he seems in this poem to have had a melancholy forecast that his life was not of long duration. Mr. Gray's poem, "*De Principiis Cogitandi*," would have been, if finished, a work of uncommon merit and consequence: the fragment is inestimable.

"When Mr. Gray went to Peter-House, in Cambridge, he had the good fortune to meet his friend Mr. Walpole, who came to the University about the same time; hence their intimacy continued. As I was near Mr. Walpole, it afforded me some opportunities of seeing them both very often. They were alike studious and regular, and still delicate to a degree of fastidiousness, which was sometimes attended with marks of contempt. This some years afterwards, was the cause of much vexation and trouble to Mr. Gray, from which his great learning and other good qualities should have exempted him.

"When Mr. Walpole set out upon his travels, Mr. Gray accompanied him, and they proceeded for a long time very amicably. But that delicacy and those nice feelings, which led them to take offence with others, began now, for want of a more distant object, to operate against themselves. Some

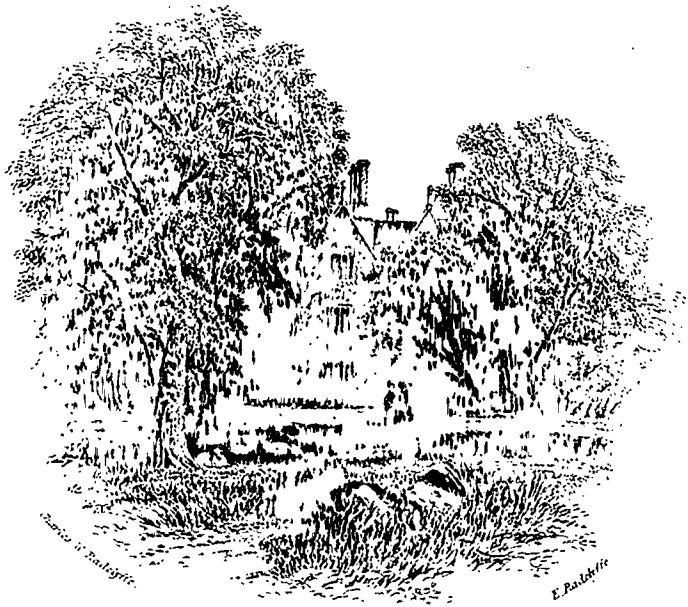
little jealousies and disgusts arose, and Mr. Gray separated himself from his friend, and came back to England.

"Mr. Walpole returned soon after, and took a house at Windsor. This affords me an opportunity of mentioning the two most excellent poems of Mr. Gray, and the cause of their production. The first is the 'View of Eton College,' the other the 'Elegy written in a Churchyard,' which was composed some years after the former.

"The year in which Mr. Walpole came to Windsor was 1742, at which time it was my good fortune to live at Eton. By these means I had often an opportunity of seeing him. He had not resided there long, when he heard that Mr. Gray was with his relations at Stoke. He accordingly sent him a kind letter, with overtures of reconciliation, and a desire to see him. Mr. Gray very gladly set out to renew his acquaintance, and as in his way he walked through the playfields at Eton, he saw the boys engaged in their different diversions, and a universal harmony prevailing. The late unhappy disagreement and separation were at that time uppermost in his mind; and when he contemplated this scene of concord and boyish happiness, he could not help, in his melancholy mood, forming a contrast. He was led to consider the feuds and quarrels which were likely one day to ensue, when all that harmony and happiness was to cease, and enmity and bitter-

ness were to succeed. He even went so far as to comprehend and anticipate all the dreadful evils to which mankind are liable. It is a gloomy picture, but finely executed; and whoever reads the description with this clue, will find that it was formed from a scene before his eyes. The poet saw and experimentally felt what he so masterly describes. I lived at that time almost upon the very spot which gave birth to these noble ideas, and in consequence of it saw the author very often.

"The other poem, 'Written in a Country Churchyard,' is, by the editor of Mr. Gray's 'Life,' supposed to have been composed about the same time as the former: but it seems to be a mistake. It took its rise from the following circumstances, some of which are mentioned by the editor, but others there are which were not known to him:—When Lady Cobham resided at her house at Stoke, Mr. Gray was at no great distance in the same parish. A noble duke, who was then at Eton school, and is still living, used often to go over and dine with that lady, and the Rev. Mr. Purt, his tutor, used to accompany them. One day Lady Cobham asked Mr. Purt if he knew Mr. Gray, a gentleman in her neighbourhood. He said that he knew him very well; that he was much respected for his learning, and was the author of the celebrated poem, styled the 'View of Eton College.' Upon this, next morning, two ladies, who were then at Lady Cobham's,



sallied out to make Mr. Gray a visit. These were Lady Schaub and Miss Harriet Speed, who afterwards married Count Very of Savoy, both persons of no common wit and vivacity. They did not find him at home. They, however, entered the house, and seemed to have caused no small alarm to the ancient mother and aunt. Having obtained pen and paper, they left an invitation from Lady Cobham to Mr. Gray, to dine with her the next day. He accordingly went, and, as we may well imagine, was very graciously received. This event gave birth to the 'Long Story,' which poem has certainly merit; but there is throughout an attempt towards humour, which is not always happily carried on, nor was it properly an ingredient in Mr. Gray's original composition.

"After this, when in the country, he was continually at Stoke House; and this always happened in the summer and autumnal months. When he returned home late in the evening, he was obliged to pass by the churchyard, which was almost close to the house, and he would sometimes deviate into it, and there spent a melancholy moment. The stillness and solemnity of the season after sunset, and the numerous dead deposited before his eyes, afforded room to a person of his turn for much contemplation. His own pensive mood, and the gloomy yet pleasing ideas which then arose, are described by him in the poem which was styled

'An Elegy written in a Churchyard.' It was certainly conceived there, and many of the stanzas probably there composed, when the awful scene was before his eyes; but the whole took up much time before it was completed. This is a composition of uncommon merit, and the most affecting of any that the world perhaps ever experienced; not only the pathos, but the harmony of the verse, and the beauty and correctness of the diction by which that pathos is conveyed, were, I believe, never surpassed. This energy, and these pleasing reflections, arose from the vivid impressions in the author's own breast. This verifies the observation of Horace:—

'Si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi.'

"Not only in this poem, but also in that upon Eton, every soothing idea originated from what the author saw and intimately felt. This was composed, to the best of my remembrance, in the year 1750; and as it was very much admired, and a great number of copies in manuscript were dispersed abroad, there was intimation given of a surreptitious edition which would soon come out. Upon this, the author himself ordered it to be printed by Mr. Dodsley. This was in the year 1751, as appears by Mr. Gray's letter to Mr. Walpole, XV. p. 222. Two years afterwards, there was a very handsome edition of Mr. Gray's poems printed in folio, with

designs by Mr. R. Bentley. We find the whole of them there arranged according to the author's own disposition, and the 'Churchyard' comes the last; and it was at that time the last of his works. In some of the stanzas towards the latter end, he has given a description of the lawn, heath, beeches, and springs of water, near which he, with his mother, resided. The nature of the country is too precisely pointed out to be mistaken. In the print, prefixed to the top of the 'Long Story,' is a view of Lady Cobham's venerable mansion, and Stoke Church hard by, where was the night scene of the poet's contemplations. But in this print the articles seem to be reversed, through the fault of the engraver.

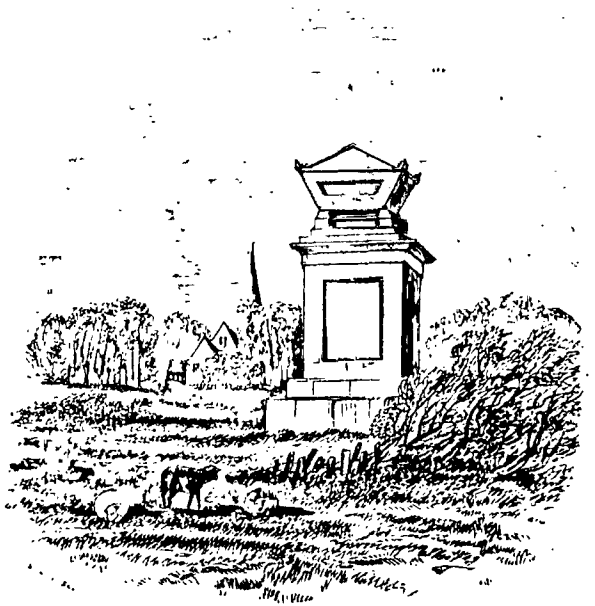
"Mr. Gray was in stature rather below the middle size. He had a pleasing countenance, in which, however, there was no extraordinary expression, consequently no indication of his internal powers. The print which is prefixed to his 'Life' is rather a caricature, for his features were not so stiff and prominent, but more rounded and delicate. I remember a picture of him by Pond, taken when he was very young, but badly executed. What became of it, I know not.

"These anecdotes of this celebrated person I take the liberty to send to you. If you should think proper either to print them, or to make

extracts from them, you will be so good as to make no mention of my name.

"I am, dear Sir,
"Your most faithful and obedient,
humble servant,
"JACOB BRYANT.

"*December 24th*, 1798."



GRAY'S MONUMENT, STOKE PARK.

LECTURE

ON

THE WRITINGS OF GRAY.

BY THE

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF CARLISLE.

The following Lecture was delivered by the Earl of Carlisle at the Sheffield Mechanics' Institute, December 14, 1852; and is now introduced, with his Lordship's kind permission, as a becoming Appendix to the Life of our Author.

I CHOSE for the subject of a lecture I delivered at Leeds, "The Poetry of Pope." I have chosen as my subject to-night, "The Writings of Gray." Why Gray? it may be asked. I have myself admitted, when I had to speak of Pope, that upon the British Parnassus were loftier names than even his. Why then do I descend lower, instead of mounting higher, on the sacred steep? In the first place, I may feel, that to descant adequately upon Shakespeare or Milton would seem to demand gifts and powers more nearly approaching to their own; just as to write worthily of Socrates, it required no one less

than Plato. Next, in these transcendent cases, the endeavour, with whatever success, has been much more frequently made. And further, I believe there to be something instinctive, which leads every one of us, not to what in our unimpassioned judgment we think the best and greatest of its kind, but to what we are sensible is most specially attractive and congenial to ourselves. The strongest personal impulse I could feel led me first of all to Pope; that first one having been satisfied, the next leads me to Gray; and I am quite confident that he is worthy enough for you to hear, and more than worthy enough for me to speak about.

In point of mere bulk, he has probably written less than any other poet, whose works are comprised in any collection of English poetry; yet but few have attempted a greater variety of styles, and these too among the most difficult and lofty in the whole range of song. He has written odes, which may be divided into the regular and the Pindaric; he has written heroic verses; he has written elegiac verses; he has written Latin heroic, Latin elegiac, and Latin lyric poetry; he has written burlesque; he has written satire; he has written part of a tragedy—and all he has written is not only excellent, but nearly perfect in its kind. If he had done more—if he had exhibited the prodigality, as well as the perfection, of his inspiration—I know not the height of eminence to which he might not have been

held entitled. His leading characteristic, and probably that which interfered mainly with his being a more prolific writer, is the nicety and purity of his taste. If I was forced to compare his style and genius with those of any other great writer, I believe that I should select Virgil. Gray had not, of course, his copiousness; he had, indeed, greater variety in the forms of composition, but the same unerring delicacy of taste—the same appropriate, but not exaggerated loftiness of diction—the same elaborate and exquisite workmanship.

I gladly back my own estimate of the poetical merits of Gray, by the weightier authority of that accomplished and discriminating writer, Sir James Mackintosh, who says, "Of all English poets he was the most finished artist. He attained the highest degree of splendour, of which poetical style seems to be capable."

His life and character demand a passing notice, though neither the one nor the other were marked by any such salient or striking points as need detain us long. He appears to have suffered under an hereditary tendency to gout, both of his parents having died of that malady. It also closed his own more illustrious career, in his fifty-fifth year, and probably gave to the whole of his sedentary and uneventful life that disposition to a pensive, but not morose, melancholy, to which he frequently alludes in his correspondence, and which has left

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most distinct impressions even on his highly-polished and carefully-laboured poetry. It will be remembered that he says of the "Youth," whom he evidently in a great degree intended for himself, that

> "Melancholy marked him for her own."

It is in this light he is represented in a poem of the last century, "The Pursuits of Literature," which attracted much attention at the time, from its general ability, from the stores of learning contained in its notes, and perhaps most of all from its long-sustained anonymous character; it is now known to have been written by Mr. Mathias, a distinguished classical and Italian scholar.

> "Go then and view, since closed his cloistered day,
> The self-supported, melancholy Gray.
> Dark was his morn of life, and bleak the spring,
> Without one fost'ring ray from Britain's King:
> Granta's dull abbots cast a sidelong glance,
> And Levite gownsmen hugged their ignorance:
> With his high spirit strove the master bard,
> And was his own exceeding great reward."

I confess that these lines, very good and forcible in themselves, appear to me rather over-charged as a correct statement of the case. "The dull abbots" of Cambridge are spoken of with extreme irreverence by Gray himself, and we may suspect that the superciliousness was quite as much on his side as on theirs; at all events he did not find the residence

at his own university by any means intolerable, as he spent there by choice the greater portion of the last twenty-nine years of his life. And with reference to the want of any "fostering ray from Britain's King," it certainly would have been very creditable to our Brunswick sovereigns (who, it must be owned, were not then enlightened patrons of art and learning), if they had distinguished so excellent a poet as Gray; but, in the first place, he not only had the option of becoming the Poet Laureate, which, perhaps, is not saying much, considering some of those who in those days wore the laurel wreath (far different from those, such as Wordsworth and Tennyson, who have conferred honour upon it in our own time); but Gray did actually receive a lucrative office, which I fear he made a sinecure—that of Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, if not actually from George III. himself, at least from his minister, the Duke of Grafton, with the king's formally conveyed assent. And I imagine, moreover, that at almost every period of his life, Gray, who never was a distressed man, would have shrunk instinctively from all the common appearances of patronage. When he travelled with the son of the most powerful prime minister whom England ever had, he contrived to quarrel with him, though I have the most direct authority *

* The elder Miss Berry, to whom Horace Walpole offered his hand.

(unhappily just removed from us) for stating, that Horace Walpole himself not only sought a reconciliation, and took frequent opportunities of marking his respect and admiration for Gray, but to his dying day he impressed upon those with whom he conversed, that the blame had been entirely on his own side—an admission which Dr. Johnson, of whom more shortly, chooses first to record, and then to sneer away. However, I say it neither in the way of praise or blame, but probably there scarcely ever was an author who had so little of the spirit of authorship about him.

To begin, he wrote extremely little—one of the greatest of readers, he was one of the most sparing of writers,—even too, when he had been brought very reluctantly to allow the publication of the immortal Elegy, he specially desires that it should be without his name, and in one place he expresses almost a ludicrous degree of horror at the notion of its being published with an engraving of his own head prefixed to it; lastly, and most conclusively of all, when later in life he authorizes two separate editions of his entire works in England and Scotland, he expressly mentions that he is to receive no remuneration for them.

The same sensitive and fastidious delicacy which pruned every expression of his pen, guarded every action of his life; and we are told by his attached and devoted editor and friend, the poet Mason,

that he even assumed an appearance of delicacy and effeminacy, as if to ward off persons whom he did not wish to please. Such may have been his weakness, and it is rather confirmed to us by the prim, closed appearance of the lips, which may be observed in the medallion of his face as it appears on his tablet, not his tomb, in Westminster Abbey.

However, I must pause for a moment longer on the undeniable merits and virtues which distinguished his character and dignified his life. His existence, on the whole, was that of a scholar and recluse, pursuing varied walks of learning, many of which he mastered, not with the massive completeness of a German student, yet with the refined diligence of an English gentleman. His fine organization specially disposed and fitted him for the skilful appreciation and enlightened enjoyment of all that falls within the domain of the fine arts; and thus, in addition to his own captivating art of poetry, he was keenly alive to the excellencies of music, painting, and architecture.

But a candid biographer of Gray would have both softer and higher qualities to dwell upon. However retiring and reserved he appears to have constitutionally been, and although there would appear to be no trace of his having ever been in love, his heart was open to the warmest emotions of friendship, nor is it easy to remember a more congenial union of tastes and feelings than distin-

guished the too brief intimacy between him and his accomplished friend, Richard West, whose premature death, as we shall shortly see, lent probably some of its most thrilling cadences to his pensive lyre. His affection for his mother was tender, constant, and practical; as one evidence of it, let me quote the short inscription on the tomb-stone he placed to her memory, in that same church-yard of Stoke Poges, which in all probability was the scene of his own most successful inspiration. After a few words upon the remains of his aunt, who had preceded here in the same grave to which he himself afterwards followed her, the simple epitaph thus goes on :—

IN THE SAME PIOUS CONFIDENCE,
BESIDE HER FRIEND AND SISTER,
HERE SLEEP THE REMAINS OF
DOROTHY GRAY,
WIDOW, THE CAREFUL TENDER MOTHER
OF MANY CHILDREN, ONE OF WHOM ALONE
HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO SURVIVE HER.

The same affectionate and persevering love to a mother is dwelt upon in a delightful preface to the "Memoirs of the Poet Moore," composed by Lord John Russell, and which I had the satisfaction of purchasing on my way here this morning. Were I, however, to make the present occasion one of controversy, I must say, when I find Lord John

Russell writing that "surely of English lyrical poets, Moore is the first," I should feel almost guilty of treason to the subject of this lecture, if I did not observe that the word "surely" was a more positive one than the opinion fairly warranted.

To these amiable natural affections which Gray exhibited, we must add a becoming tone of religious sentiment, whenever it is introduced, and the occasions are not unfrequent, either in his correspondence or his verse; and it kindles even into a noble scorn, whenever it is called forth by any display of shallow scepticism, or aping of infidel philosophy. He appears to have always spoken with the utmost repugnance of Bolingbroke and Voltaire. In one place he thus pointedly describes himself:—

"No very great wit,—he believed in a God."

It would be doing great injustice to Gray, if no mention should be made of him as a letter-writer. He occupies no mean place among that entertaining, and surely not ignoble, company. With less of sparkle and amusing matter than his fellow-traveller, Horace Walpole—with less of the unapproachable charm of simplicity and power of vivifying the most common-place topics than Cowper—he holds rather a middle station between them; and falling short of their respective extremes of excellence. partakes to a certain extent of both.

His correspondence is more full of illustration from varied learning, and the rich colouring of art, than the homely Cowper's; his letters during his Italian travels, and his descriptive tour of the English lakes, are both more graphic and more simple than the artificial Walpole's.

With respect to his different notices of scenery, I cannot quote a more distinct authority than that again of Sir James Mackintosh, who says in one of his letters, "I am struck by the recollection of a sort of merit in Gray, which is not generally observed—that he was the first discoverer of the beauties of nature in England, and has marked out the course of every picturesque journey that can be made in it."

My business on these occasions is not, or but very subordinately at least, with composition in prose; and I will only, in the way of example, give three very brief extracts from our poet's letters. I will begin with pure description: Here is a glimpse of Italy—the merest glimpse—but it puts the reader right in the midst of it:—

"I am now going to the window, to tell you it is the most beautiful of Italian nights. There is a moon! There are stars for you! Do not you hear the fountain? Do not you smell the orange-flowers? That building yonder is the Convent of St. Isidore, and that eminence with the cypress-trees and firs upon it, the top of Mount Quirinal."

We will next transfer ourselves to an English

landscape, and will take what he says of one of the smallest of our northern lakes, Little Grasmere :—

"The bosom of the mountains spreading here into a broad bason, discovers in the midst Grasmere-water; its margin is hollowed into two small bays, with bold eminences, some of rock, some of soft turf, that half conceal and vary the form of the little lake they command : from the shore, a lone promontory pushes itself far into the water, and on it stands a white village, with the parish church rising in the midst of it: hanging enclosures, corn-fields, and meadows green as an emerald, with their trees and hedges, and cattle, fill up the whole space from the edge of the water; and just opposite to you is a large farm-house at the bottom of a steep smooth lawn, embosomed in old woods, which climb half-way up the mountain's side, and discover above them a broken line of crags that crown the scene. Not a single red tile, no glaring gentleman's house, or garden walls, break in upon the repose of this little unsuspected paradise; but all is peace, rusticity, and happy poverty, in its neatest most becoming attire."

Does not every word prove to us, that it is intended to show off the scene, and not one of them the writer?

My remaining extract shall approach nearer to sentiment, and to that one sentiment which displays itself more amiably than any other in Gray's whole character—the affection for his mother, to which I have already referred. There is, as you will perceive, some levity in the mode of expression, but none, as I think you will feel, to neutralize its tenderness. He is writing to a young friend :—

"I had written to you to beg you would take care of your mother, and to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life, one can never have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and what you call a trite observation. You are a green gosling! I was at the same age as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction, I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but as yesterday; and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart."

I may now proceed to comment upon the poetry of Gray; in doing which I may indulge myself with a little more detail, since, limited as it is in quantity, I should otherwise very soon come to the end of my subject.

In setting out, however, on this topic, I do not feel myself at liberty to omit a more direct reference to that notable commentary upon the poems of Gray which closes—I would fain say, disgraces—that generally attractive work of our great English critic, Dr. Johnson, the "Prefaces to the Works of the English Poets." To free myself from the imputation of any undue prejudice on this point, I would remark, that the qualities alike of Dr. Johnson's writings, mind, and character, are so strongly marked and prominent, that I can well imagine very wide differences of opinion concerning them; my own feeling for the most part is that of high admiration. Having thus guarded myself, I have no scruple in denouncing his criticism on Gray as a

proof, in this instance, either of a most sovereign want of taste, or a low and degrading jealousy. I hesitate, indeed, to attribute it to an actual personal envy of the reputation of a man who died before the "Prefaces" were composed, but I am inclined to ascribe the extreme bitterness which pervades it to a mixture of the two alternative causes, the very mixture perhaps preventing each from attaining its full amount of offensiveness. I conceive Johnson to have been altogether deficient in sympathy for the peculiar bent of Gray's character and genius, his refined, fastidious, elaborate taste; and then the bad temper, of which the Doctor had occasionally rather a copious store, was excited at the praise and admiration lavished on qualities which he himself failed to recognise or appreciate.

I do not think it necessary to pause upon the Latin compositions of Gray. Mason asserts, that when he first knew him, he seemed to set a greater value on his Latin poetry than on that which he had composed in his native language; and Dr. Johnson has the courage to imply, that it might have been better for him to have adhered to the Latin. It would have done the doctor no good; Gray beat him *easy* in both languages. His Latin poetry is not, indeed, uniformly out of the reach of even modern criticism; and we have it for the most part rather in small fragments, as well as in great variety of form; but it is, on the whole, extremely

beautiful. It would be out of place to quote from it here; but I beg to refer my classical hearers to the alcaic ode on the Monastery of the Great Chartreuse, to the hexameters on leaving Florence, to the noble apostrophe on the death of his friend West in his intended philosophic poem, and to the short elegiac lines on the battle-field of the Trebia, as well as the description of the triumph of Massinissa, in the heroic epistle from Sophonisba.

The Ode on the Spring seems to have been the earliest English production which appears in the usual printed collection of his poems. It was written in the twenty-sixth year of his age, and he, therefore, does not come before us with any display of that precocious sensitiveness to verse, which heralded the meridian glories of Pope and many others. He appears, indeed, to have written some translations while at college, out of one of which, from Tasso, I extract this striking couplet on the Diamond:—

> "The diamond there attracts the wondrous sight,
> Proud of its thousand dies, and luxury of light."

But to continue—this Ode on the Spring, as we thus have almost a right to expect, is as nicely polished, and as carefully finished, as almost any of his subsequent compositions; it seems to be overcast by that shadow of melancholy, which I have already described as a constant ingredient of his

character, but which was now further deepened by the mortal illness of his beloved friend and contemporary West, who, indeed, died after Gray had sent to him, but before he had received this very poem.

The singing of birds is well named

> "The untaught harmony of spring;"

And a hot noon is pourtrayed with much truth—

> "Still is the toiling hand of care,
> The panting herds repose;
> Yet hark! how, thro' the peopled air,
> The busy murmur glows!
> The insect youth are on the wing,
> Eager to taste the honied spring,
> And float amid the liquid noon."

I ought not to omit the moral reflection—

> "How vain the ardor of the crowd!
> How low, how indigent the proud!
> How little are the great!"

I do not feel myself called upon to pause over the next ode, "On the Death of a Favourite Cat, drowned in a tub of Gold Fishes," which, without containing anything which the Muse need stop to censure, is certainly one of the very few pieces of Gray for which I have no wish to claim the attribute of perfection.

I must tell my hearers, that I spent above six years of my life as a boy at Eton School; and so

they must excuse me for bursting forth with filial fervour—

> " Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
> That crown the watery glade;
> Where grateful science still adores
> Her Henry's holy shade."

How often to scattered old Etonians, amid the multiplied walks of busy life, and in all quarters of the globe, have these few simple descriptive lines, since they were first written, now above 100 years ago, recalled that well-remembered spot—that sward, green as any in all green England—those venerable elms, that appear, as they probably are, coeval with the grey towers to which their deep green lends its softening contrast—that more than classic stream, our own Father Thames, its clear waters, as yet pure of London sewage, unequalled even among mightier rivers for the beauty of its dimpling ripples—or, immediately above, those royal turrets of Windsor, looking the embodiment of British monarchy, ancient, gentle, strong—the whole scene, with all its accompaniments, tending to make even these early days of education, both in their actual experience and in their abiding retrospect, romantic while they are careless, and conservative while they are expansive.

I may mention, that I felt so strongly the kind of identification which this brief ode gives to the Muse of Gray with the memory of Eton, that upon

a proposal being lately made, that a collection of busts of the principal worthies of Eton should be placed in the large school-room there, most of which were contributed by some of their descendants or connexions, I requested permission to present a bust of Gray, though certainly I could make out no plea of consanguinity, or any other but very sincere and fervent admiration.

I do not think the remainder of the ode altogether free from exception. In the first place, it is not wholly accurate in its representation of Eton school-boy life, which seems singular, as Gray had ample experience of it. It is the normal habit of an Eton boy to be what is termed "out of bounds," and he certainly does not perpetrate that act of nominal lawlessness with any of the timorous feelings attributed to him in the verses,—

> "Some bold adventurers disdain
> The limits of their little reign,
> And unknown regions dare descry:
> Still as they run, they look behind,
> They hear a voice in every wind,
> And snatch a fearful joy."

"Rollicking carelessness" would be a far truer designation than "fearful joy."

But even here, on this scene of joyous memories, the persevering melancholy of Gray soon pounces down :—

> "Alas! regardless of their doom,
> The little victims play!"

And then they are charitably consigned for the rest of their lives to "black misfortune's baleful train," to "the stormy passions," to

> "Disdainful anger, pallid fear,
> And shame, that skulks behind;"

—to "pining love," and "jealousy," and "envy wan," and "faded care," and "grim-visaged comfortless despair," and "bitter scorn," and "grinning infamy," and "keen remorse," and "moody madness," and "the painful family of death," and "poverty," and "slow-consuming age."

That some admixture of these evils must (to use a current phrase) "loom in the distance" over a portion of every large assembly of human beings, will undoubtedly be but too true; but our bard of Eton has surely here deepened the shadows on his canvass into too uniformly sombre a hue, and has entirely omitted the clear spots and shining spaces which, with at least equal truth, he might have scattered over his prophetic landscape. How many gems of future excellence, how much budding promise of yet undeveloped genius and unexercised virtue, he might have discovered in the "many a sprightly race," over whom he could only vent such dark forebodings! To confine our view to the most prominent walks of public life, civil or military, in our own day, it may be stated, that of the six last Prime Ministers of this country, four have been Eton men; and not very long after the poet had

cast his desponding glance upon that boyish group, among those who disported on "the margent green" was Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington!

The reflection with which this piece terminates is very familiarly known—

> "Where ignorance is bliss,
> 'Tis folly to be wise!"

The Hymn to Adversity stands next. I think the opening invocation very solemn and imposing—

> "Daughter of Jove, relentless power,
> Thou tamer of the human breast,
> Whose iron scourge and tort'ring hour
> The bad affright, afflict the best!"

In an ode to Adversity, Gray had a clear right to indulge his usual propensity to melancholy, and he well characterizes this, his own chosen associate—

> "And Melancholy, silent maid,
> With leaden eye, that loves the ground."

Among his unfinished Poems was found one, headed "An Ode on the Pleasure arising from Vicissitude." All that remains is composed with great care and beauty, but I only quote one stanza, which, although the idea is rather closely borrowed from a French original, yet it is so true to Nature, and has received such simple, appropriate, and complete expression from Gray, that he has fairly made it his own:

"See the wretch, that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost,
And breathe and walk again:
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening paradise."

I come now to the two great odes, which more peculiarly represent the varied, though not irregular structure, and fervid tone of that form of composition, not improperly termed Pindaric, and which signally developed the genuine ore in the poetic vein of Gray. It is to these, and to one written later, and not unworthy to be associated with them, that we must mainly refer the expressions in the stanza inscribed by Mason, as an epitaph, on Gray's Monument in Westminster Abbey:

"No more the Grecian muse unrivalled reigns;
To Britain let the nations homage pay!
She boasts a Homer's fire in Milton's strains,
A Pindar's rapture in the lyre of Gray."

To quote Mackintosh once more, he says, "Of the two grand attributes of the Ode, Dryden had displayed the enthusiasm, Gray exhibited the magnificence."

It is upon these two odes, "The Progress of

Poesy" and "The Bard," that Dr. Johnson has more especially permitted himself to indulge his sneering and captious vein: he terms them "the wonderful wonder of wonders, by which, though either vulgar ignorance or common sense at first universally rejected them, many have been since persuaded to think themselves delighted." Gray himself tells us in a note, that he had been advised, even by his friends, to subjoin some few explanatory notes, but that he had too much respect for the understanding of his readers to take that liberty. In a subsequent edition, however, he manifested a little more condescension for their want of penetration.

The Progress of Poesy stands first; and never, as it appears to me, has the execution been in more complete accordance with the subject: the Progress of Poesy is chronicled by genuine Poesy herself. Early in it occurs the adaptation of a noble passage from Pindar, which Dr. Johnson is pleased to class among the common-places of a school-boy. I affirm, that any person of real poetic taste, both among those who can, and those who cannot enjoy the original, must equally appreciate the imitation, though Gray himself rightly designates the lines of Pindar as incomparable. The purport of the passage is, to describe the effect of music, not only on the passions of the human soul, but on the whole animal creation:

"Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen cares,
And frantic passions, hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,
And dropp'd his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye."

I remember this passage on the eagle receiving a sufficiently dignified application in the House of Lords, where it was quoted by Lord Lansdowne, as descriptive of the position of the Emperor Napoleon in the island of Elba: the Bird of Empire shortly afterwards awoke. I hope we need apprehend no undue activity on his part in the present conjuncture!

In the next stanza, there seems to me another marvellously false criticism from Dr. Johnson. He says, "'Idalia's velvet green' has something of cant. An epithet or metaphor drawn from nature ennobles art; an epithet or metaphor drawn from art degrades nature." No, Doctor! there is no such arbitrary or one-sided rule: those epithets and metaphors are good and poetical, which, provided they are seemly in idea and language, put the conception before you in the way which most vividly presents a picture of it to the mind. One of Gray's

editors makes the refutation of this heavy bit of dogmatism complete, by bringing to bear upon it instances selected from Shakespeare, to whom all men bow; and from Dr. Johnson himself, to whom, I presume, Dr. Johnson would bow.

Having traced the progress of Poesy through her old classic regions,

> " Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
> Isles, that crown th' Ægean deep,
> Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
> Where each old poetic mountain
> Inspiration breathed around;
> Ev'ry shade and hallow'd fountain
> Murmur'd deep a solemn sound;"

we are brought, after her wanderings, to the home she at last found in our own England. I cannot pass over the picture of the infant Shakespeare, and his early familiarity with mighty Nature—

> " Far from the sun and summer-gale,
> In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
> What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
> To him the mighty mother did unveil
> Her awful face: The dauntless child
> Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smiled.
> 'This pencil take,' she said, 'whose colours clear
> Richly paint the vernal year:
> Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!
> This can unlock the gates of Joy;
> Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears,
> Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic Tears.'"

If this presentation of Shakespeare is full of its appropriate grace and tenderness, that of Milton,

which follows it, is not less distinguished by characteristic elevation and grandeur. It is rather curious to find Dr. Johnson admitting, that the allusion, with which it concludes, to his blindness, if caused by study in the formation of his poem, is poetical and happy, though it has been impugned by others as too nearly approaching to a conceit.

> " Nor second He, that rode sublime
> Upon the seraph-wings of ecstasy,
> The secrets of th' abyss to spy.
> He pass'd the flaming bounds of space and time:
> The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze,
> Where angels tremble, while they gaze,
> He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
> Closed his eyes in endless night."

Then of Dryden :—

> " Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car
> Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
> Two coursers of ethereal race,
> With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.
> Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
> Bright-eyed fancy, hovering o'er,
> Scatters from her pictured urn
> Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn."

Gray shows, in the concluding line of this splendid ode, a proper estimate of the rank to which genius like his own may fairly pretend :—

> " Beneath the good how far—how far above the great."

The next of the great Pindaric odes, " The Bard," is still more generally popular, and familiar

to our recollections. I will not take upon myself to pronounce that it is superior in poetical merit, but it is infinitely more dramatic, has more fire and passion, and, what may not have weighed a little in procuring its general acceptance, it deals with the striking events and epochs of our national history. The opening, as becomes this species of poetry, is full of abrupt energy:—

> "Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
> Confusion on thy banners wait!
> Though, fann'd by conquest's crimson wing,
> They mock the air with idle state."

Now here I cannot refrain from giving a specimen of Dr. Johnson's candid and discriminating criticism! He finds himself obliged to confess, that this abrupt beginning has been celebrated, but he adds, "Technical beauties can give praise only to the inventor. It is in the power of any man to rush abruptly on his subject, that has read the ballad of Johnny Armstrong:—

> "'Is there ever a man in all Scotland.'"

Oh, doctor, doctor!

As the doctor has drawn me into levity, I must mention an Eton tradition of an occasion when the opening was, indeed, deemed too abrupt. Upon one of George III.'s visits to the School, when the annual speeches are delivered, "The Bard" had been set down as the first piece to be

recited, when it all at once occurred to the boy who had to repeat it, that it would hardly seem courteous, or even loyal, to burst out with—

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!"

The address of the Bard to the memories and graves of his tuneful brethren, supposed to have perished in the invasion, is very impressive:—

"Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay."

Let me pause for a moment on this last line, to say a word upon the form of speech called "alliteration." Sometimes it is condemned wholesale as an unworthy artifice to jingle on the ear, without any corresponding advantage to the sense. Dr. Johnson naturally takes the opportunity of observing, "that it is below the grandeur of a poem, that endeavours at sublimity." There can be no doubt that it may be abused, and, if resorted to habitually, must be offensive both to the ear and the judgment; but there is as little doubt that its temperate and judicious adoption may add most materially to the effect of a passage. I adduce this line as an example:—

"To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay."

Now, if Gray had transposed the words, the sense would have been precisely as good, but no one will

pretend that the effect of the line would have been marred, as thus :—

" To soft Llewellyn's harp, or high-born Hoel's lay."

The machinery, if I may use the term, employed in the further conduct of the poem appears to me eminently poetical. The shades of the murdered bards are descried on the neighbouring cliffs, weaving the winding-sheet of their conqueror's family, and foretelling all the chequered destinies which befel that royal line. They begin with the murder of his son, Edward II. :—

" Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death through Berkley's roof that ring;
Shrieks of an agonizing king!"

The contrast between the neglected death-bed of the hero-monarch, Edward III., and the brilliant opening of the reign of his spoiled, luxurious grandson, Richard II., with its subsequent dismal obscuration, is most impressively presented :—

" Mighty victor, mighty lord,
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable Warrior fled?
Thy son is gone: He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noon-tide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.

Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey."

After dwelling for some time further amidst images of war and carnage, the scene changes to the days bright with the glories both of empire and literature, reserved for England in the virgin reign of Elizabeth :—

" Visions of glory, spare my aching sight!
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!"

What poetical force there is in that word *crowd*, arising, it strikes, me, from the contrast of anything so shadowy and impalpable as the coming ages with the hard, familiar, strictly perceptible pressure of a crowd.

There are four lines in the concluding stanza which I have heard rather frequently quoted in Parliament and on the hustings; indeed, I have trespassed in that way myself. When an orator wishes to denounce a tyrant, civil or ecclesiastical, or to discourage over-gloomy forebodings of evil, out he comes—

" Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray."

There is another fine ode on the installation of

the Duke of Grafton, as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. I believe I am not incorrect in stating that there has been a fashion among the disciples of the Lake School of Poets, of whom Mr. Wordsworth may be considered the head, to hold the poetry of Gray rather cheap. I have no wish to canvass here the poetical merits of the different writers of that school. I will merely observe, that Mr. Wordsworth, when poet laureate, also composed an installation ode for a Chancellor of the University of Cambridge; nor can it be said that he laboured under any disadvantage in respect of the person to be celebrated, as his chancellor, instead of rather a common-place, worldly politician, like the Duke of Grafton, was the present husband of Queen Victoria. With respect to the odes themselves, certainly no admirer of Gray need shrink from the comparison.

We may trace the fondness with which Gray through life retained his academic association, mellowed by his own peculiar and abiding pensive temperament :—

"Ye brown o'er-arching groves,
That Contemplation loves,
Where willowy Camus lingers with delight!
Oft at the blush of dawn
I trod your level lawn,
Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright
In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
With Freedom by my side, and soft-eyed Melancholy."

I think he grew still fonder of melancholy as he grew older: in the "Hymn to Adversity," she has "leaden eyes;" she has now become "soft-eyed."

There is an extremely poetical description of an imaginary procession of the founders and benefactors of the different colleges in this renowned University. Suppose that you see sweeping along King Edward III.; Mary de Chatillon, Countess of Pembroke, whose earl was slain on her marriage-day in a tournament; Elizabeth, Countess of Clare, grand-daughter of Edward I.; Margaret of Anjou; Elizabeth, Queen of Edward IV.; Henry VI.; Henry VIII. Now here they come:—

"But hark! the portals sound, and pacing forth
With solemn steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of royal birth,
And mitred fathers in long order go:
Great Edward, with the lilies on his brow
From haughty Gallia torn,
And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn
That wept her bleeding love, and princely Clare,
And Anjou's heroine, and the paler Rose,
The rival of her crown and of her woes,
And either Henry there,
The murder'd saint, and the majestic lord,
That broke the bonds of Rome."

I suppose Gray must have been led by his Eton prepossessions always to speak with such indulgence of Henry VI.; in no less than three of his poems he talks of "Henry's holy shade," and then of "the meek usurper's holy head," and here of

"the murdered saint." With regard to Henry VIII., he clearly was not a saint, but he calls him

> "The majestic lord,
> That broke the bonds of Rome."

And I do not think it would be possible for bluff King Hal to be more happily characterised by any one, who wished to make rather à complimentary mention of him, without any sacrifice of truth.

I must further cite that short, but very beautiful stanza, worthy of being called, as it is in the previous line, "the liquid language of the skies." I have known statesmen apply part of it to cheer and sustain themselves in the hour of languor, and under the chill of disappointment :—

> "What is grandeur, what is power?
> Heavier toil, superior pain.
> What the bright reward we gain?
> The grateful memory of the good.
> Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
> The bee's collected treasures sweet,
> Sweet music's melting fall, but sweeter yet
> The still small voice of gratitude."

I do not intend to pause upon the few pieces which profess to be adaptations from the Norse and Welsh tongues. Though executed with a certain degree of spirit, I do not think that they possess any strong interest. There are lines which sound like an anticipation of Sir Walter Scott :—

> " Facing to the northern clime,
> Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme;
> Thrice pronounced the accents dread,
> The thrilling verse that wakes the dead."

But Sir Walter Scott has imparted to these themes far more fire and vivacity.

I do not think either that the few epitaphs published in the works call for any particular notice.

I must speak far otherwise of the Fragment of a Philosophical Poem, which at one time he intended to write. He says of it himself, " What name to give it, I know not; but the subject is the Alliance of Education and Government. I mean to show that they must both concur, to produce great and useful men." He does not seem to have finished much above a hundred lines of his original design, but they are cast in the noblest mould of excellence. I will not quote any of the more didactic portions, but I must give two extracts from the more illustrative passages. Take first this account of the invasion of Italy by the northern barbarians :—

> " As oft have issued, host impelling host,
> The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast.
> The prostrate south to the destroyer yields
> Her boasted titles, and her golden fields:
> With grim delight the brood of winter view
> A brighter day, and heav'ns of azure hue;
> Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
> And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows."

These few exquisite couplets seem to me to condense all the history of Gibbon, and all the scenery of Italy.

The other passage controverts the notion that the diversities of national character can be referred exclusively to differences of climate :—

> "Need we the influence of the northern star
> To string our nerves and steel our hearts to war?
> And, where the face of nature laughs around,
> Must sick'ning virtue fly the tainted ground?
> Unmanly thought! what seasons can control,
> What fancied zone can circumscribe the soul,
> Who, conscious of the source from whence she springs,
> By reason's light, on resolution's wings,
> Spite of her frail companion, dauntless goes
> O'er Libya's deserts and through Zembla's snows?"

Every lover of good poetry must sincerely lament that Gray's design was never completed; there were some detached maxims or sentiments among his papers, which probably were intended to be interwoven with its further progress. I will confine myself to the only one of them which is in verse, and which is indeed a very pithy as well as very pretty couplet :—

> "When love could teach a monarch to be wise,
> And gospel light first dawned from Bullen's eyes."

Nor must I wholly pass over another fragment left by Gray, the opening scene of a tragedy, which was to have been called "Agrippina." Many even

of his usual admirers are rather apt to abandon him here, and his own attached and sympathising friend West was not very encouraging. I venture to think that our language has sustained a real injury in the early stoppage of the piece. I agree with Mr. Mason, that as the subject was probably suggested by Racine's admirable play of "Britannicus" (his second in merit—I have heard it pronounced by very competent French authority as ranking next to his beautiful "Phædra"), so the execution of what was completed is very much in the manner of that great tragedian, who, if perhaps esteemed at some periods, and by some persons above his merits, would appear at the present time to be valued far beneath them. It is not enough to say that neither Racine or Gray were Shakespeare, as Gray himself tells us in his own beautiful stanza—

> "But not to one, in this benighted age,
> Is that diviner inspiration given,
> That burns in Shakespeare's or in Milton's page—
> The pomp and prodigality of heaven."

You may not like the regular and formal mould of the French drama, but, the style and form being given, the question lies as to the merit of the execution; and in this point of view I feel sure, from the single specimen we possess, that the tragic muse of Gray would have swept the stage, if with something of classic coldness, yet with great vigour of thought, and most exalted majesty of diction. I

will only extract a few lines; the more readily, as it is his only production in blank verse. Agrippina is warned by a confidant, to beware the resentment of her son, the Emperor Nero :—

" And dost thou talk to me, to me of danger,
Of haughty youth and irritated power,
To her that gave it being, her that arm'd
This painted Jove, and taught his novice hand
To aim the forked bolt; while he stood trembling
Scar'd at the sound, and dazzled with its brightness?
'Twas I
Oped his young eye to bear the blaze of greatness;
Show'd him where empire tower'd, and bade him strike
The noble quarry. Gods! then was the time
To shrink from danger; fear might then have worn
The mask of prudence: but a heart like mine,
A heart that glows with the pure Julian fire,
If bright ambition from her craggy seat
Display the radiant prize, will mount undaunted,
Gain the rough heights, and grasp the dangerous honour."

I had nearly omitted to mention that, of course, Dr. Johnson remarks, that it was no loss to the English stage that "Agrippina" was never finished. This, from the author of the tragedy of "Irene," seems to me not a little cool!

I had included satire among the departments to which Gray's poetry extended. Among the short specimens extant, there is nothing of sufficient present interest to quote; but the lines on the first Lord Holland, on Mr. Etough's picture, and the Earl of Sandwich's canvass of the University of

Cambridge, under the name of "Jemmy Twitcher," go far to prove, that if Gray had thought proper to indulge in that vein to his full bent, he could both have sported like Horace, and lashed like Juvenal.

The stanzas which he has christened "The Long Story" have a certain degree of playful humour; but they only owe their origin to the accident of the moment, and would have no particular attraction at the present time.

I have reserved for my last topic of observation the "Elegy in a Country Church-yard." And let me here say, that however "artificial, ornamental, glittering, cumbrous, harsh, affected, strutting"—I borrow my epithets from the generous stores of Dr. Johnson—the poetry of Gray may have been sometimes denominated (my hearers will form their own judgment with what degree of truth), I believe I do not go too far in stating, that his Elegy is, for its size, the most popular poem ever written in any language. In corroboration of this rather positive opinion, I may appeal to the common verdict of mankind, to its lines forming household words in all memories, to its being the subject of incessant quotation, and of scarcely less frequent translation, imitation, and parody. I prefer to repeat no other terms of eulogy than those of Dr. Johnson himself, who here fairly gives in; and I am at least glad to close accounts with the great censor in a spirit of peace—indeed, of thorough agreement and sym-

pathy. His words are :—"In the character of the Elegy, I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for by the common sense of readers, uncorrupted by literary prejudices, after all the refinement of subtilty, and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honour. 'The Church-yard' abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him."

But I am able to adduce testimony still higher, more affecting, and probably unparalleled in its kind, to the merits of this surpassing poem, and its influence over the human heart. We are always glad to have our own judgments assisted and guided by the thoughts and doings of eminent men; and these require a more impressive and thrilling interest, if they have been expressed shortly before the close of their lives. Let me present you with two tributes paid to the Elegy of Gray at the end of two very varied historical careers, with just more than a century intervening between them. We are informed upon what appears to be sufficient authority, that on the night before the capture of Quebec—which, of all the single passages in the long catalogue of British glories, was perhaps the most romantic in its incidents, and the most decisive in its consequences—General Wolfe, with his small band of

soldiers, was being rowed up past the hostile ramparts and between the steep cliffs which line the St. Lawrence, and there and then, in the stillness of that dark summer night, and on the eve of his glorious victory and immortal death, he repeated to those around him some of the stanzas of the Elegy, and then said, "Well, gentlemen, I had rather be the author of that poem, than take Quebec."

I pass on to my more recent instance. About two months ago, the great American statesman, Mr. Webster, was lying upon his death-bed. Of course, this is not the occasion for estimating the character and qualities of Mr. Webster; upon two points I think there can be little difference of opinion—the force of his intellectual powers, and the affecting and ennobling account we have received of his dying hours. But, from the particulars which are there recorded, we find that even in the intervals of severe pain, even in the languor of decaying nature, even amidst the appropriate and exalted topics of Christian penitence and hope, there was a further craving of the dying man yet unsatisfied. We are told, that he was heard to repeat somewhat indistinctly the words "Poet, poetry —Gray, Gray." His son repeated the first line of the Elegy:—

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day."

"That's it, that's it!" exclaimed Mr. Webster.

The book was brought, and other stanzas read, which seemed to give him pleasure.

Surely it is not a slight thing to have satisfied, so far as the world they were about to leave was concerned, the latest aspirations of such a hero as Wolfe, and such a statesman as Webster!

The very popularity and general acceptance of so brief a poem discourages any multiplied quotations from it. The opening description at once puts the village life of England before us, even though the very commencing word "The curfew," is a recollection of obsolete habits. In the second stanza, is there not twilight in the very sounds?

> "Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
> And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
> Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
> And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds."

All is so purely appropriate, without being for an instant tame or undignified, which is the great difference to my mind between Gray and more modern schools. Then we have the picture of the specific subject of the poem taken more closely:—

> "Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
> Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
> Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
> The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

The author of the "Pursuits of Literature," to whom I have already referred, terms the following

the great stanza, and I am inclined to think not improperly :—

> "The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
> And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
> Await alike th' inevitable hour:
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

All sermons are here concentrated; and how every expression comes up to the full dignity of the most solemn of all human themes, without the slightest strain or inflation.

You would justly blame me, if I forbore to remind you how it is said, with most eloquent truth :—

> "Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
> Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
> Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
> Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre."

I do not give the couplet on the gem, because I might be told that "purest ray *serene*" is what we should have called at school a *botch;* but there is nothing imperfect in the flower :—

> "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Many of you will be sufficiently familiar with the "village Hampden" and the "mute inglorious Milton," who follow next.

There is much tender beauty in these two stanzas :—

"For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind?"

Alliteration is surely employed with much effect in that last line.

"On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires."

I must not pursue the description of the care-crazed or love-crossed youth, and his epitaph. I would rather ask you to judge what the excellence of the finished poem must be, from which the author deliberately rejected two such stanzas as these, after they had been once inserted :—

"Hark, how the sacred calm that breathes around,
Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease,
In still small accents breathing from the ground
A grateful earnest of eternal peace."

And this, descriptive of the rustic tomb of the village scholar :—

"There scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are showers of violets found:
The red-breast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground."

Such, then, were the melancholy, but gentle reveries of the poet, to whom we must now bid

farewell, in the churchyard of Stoke Pogis; for although its claim to be the actual scene of the Elegy is disputed with another neighbouring village, I cannot question that the one which was nearest to his place of residence, answering adequately as it does to all the touches in his description, and which has since received his mother's remains and his own, was the real theatre of inspiration. But whoever, among the numerous English and American pilgrims who flock thither every year, may gaze on that sequestered spot, even without such fond domestic associations as I have recently happened to acquire with it, will not be slow to acknowledge the grace and charm of that strictly English scenery which composes the whole view. Immediately before and around you are the ivy-mantled tower—the rugged elms—the yew-tree's shade—the mouldering turf-heaps. Skirting this precinct are the smooth turf—the over-arching glades—the reposing deer of the English park. Not far beyond are the "antique towers" of Eton—"the stately brow" of Windsor. But even the royalty, the chivalry, the learning of our annals, are put aside for the time; you feel the ground to be sacred to the common lot and daily life of humanity, and that these, together with that soft peaceful landscape which surrounds you, have been adorned and ennobled by the Muse of GRAY.

STANZAS

BY THE REV. J. MOULTRIE.

STANZAS.

I.

SEED-TIME and harvest, summer's genial heat,
And winter's nipping cold, and night and day
Their stated changes, as of old, repeat,
And must, until this world shall pass away;
While nations rise, and flourish, and decay,
And mighty revolutions shake the earth,
Filling men's hearts with trouble and dismay;
And war and rapine, pestilence and dearth,
To many a monstrous shape of pain and woe give birth.

II.

But still, while states and empires wax and wane,
And busy generations fret and die,
The face of Nature doth unchanged remain;
Small token is there in the earth or sky
Of dissolution or mortality;
But streams are bright, and meadows flowery still,
And woods retain their ancient greenery,
And shade and sunshine chequer dale and hill,
Though all the abodes of men be rife with wrong and ill.

III.

There is no feature of thy fair domain
Which of decay or change displays a trace,
No charm of thine but doth undimm'd remain,
O thou my boyhood's blest abiding-place,
While five-and-twenty years with stealthy pace
Have cool'd thy son's rash blood, and thinn'd his hair,
The old expression lingers on thy face,
The spirit of past days unquench'd is there,
While all things else are changed, and changing everywhere.

IV.

And through thy spacious courts, and o'er thy green
Irriguous meadows, swarming as of old,
A youthful generation still is seen,
Of birth, of mind, of humour manifold:
The grave, the gay, the timid, and the bold,—
The noble nursling of the palace hall,—
The merchant's offspring, heir to wealth untold,—
The pale-eyed youth, whom learning's spells enthral,
Within thy cloisters meet, and love thee, one and all.

V.

Young art thou still, and young shalt ever be
In spirit, as thou wast in years gone by;
The present, past, and future blend in thee,
Rich as thou art in names which cannot die,
And youthful hearts already beating high
To emulate the glories won of yore;
That days to come may still the past outvie,
And thy bright roll be lengthen'd more and more
Of statesman, bard, and sage well versed in noblest lore.

VI.

Ah! well, I ween, knew HE what worth is thine,
How deep a debt to thee his genius owed,—
The Statesman, who of late, in life's decline,
Of public care threw off the oppressive load,
While yet his unquench'd spirit gleam'd and glow'd
With the pure light of Greek and Roman song,—
That gift, in boyish years by thee bestow'd,
And cherish'd, lov'd, and unforgotten long,
While cares of state press'd round in close continuous throng.

VII.

Not unprepared was that majestic mind,
By food and nurture once derived from thee,
To shape and sway the fortunes of mankind;
And by sagacious counsel and decree
Direct and guide Britannia's destiny—
Her mightiest ruler o'er the subject East:
Yet in his heart of hearts no joy had he
So pure, as when, from empire's yoke releas'd,
To thee once more he turned with love that never ceased.

VIII.

Fain would he cast life's fleshly burden down
Where its best hours were spent, and sink to rest,
Weary of greatness, sated with renown,
Like a tired child upon his mother's breast.
Proud may'st thou be of that his fond bequest,
Proud that, within thy consecrated ground,
He sleeps amidst the haunts he lov'd the best;
Where many a well-known, once-familiar sound
Of water, earth, and air for ever breathes around.

IX.

Such is thine empire over mightiest souls
Of men who wield earth's sceptres; such thy spell,
Which until death and after death controls
Hearts which no fear could daunt, no force could quell:
What marvel then, if softer spirits dwell
With fondest love on thy remember'd sway?
What marvel, if the hearts of poets swell,
Recording at life's noon, with grateful lay,
How sweetly in thy shades its morning slipp'd away?

X.

Such tribute paid thee once, in pensive strains,
ONE mighty in the realm of lyric song,—
A ceaseless wanderer through the wide domains
Of thought, which to the studious soul belong;—
One far withdrawn from this world's busy throng,
And seeking still, in academic bowers,
A safe retreat from tumult, strife, and wrong;
Where, solacing with verse his lonely hours,
He wove these fragrant wreaths of amaranthine flowers.

XI.

To him, from boyhood to life's latest hour,
The passion, kindled first beside the shore
Of thine own Thames, retained its early power.
'Twas his with restless footsteps to explore
All depths of ancient and of modern lore;
With unabated love to feed the eye
Of silent thought on the exhaustless store
Of beauty, which the gifted may descry
In all the teeming land of fruitful phantasy.

XII.

To him the Grecian muse, devoutly woo'd,
Unveil'd her beauty, and entranced his ear,
In many a wrapt imaginative mood,
With harmony which only poets hear
Even in that old enchanted atmosphere:
To him the painter's and the sculptor's art
Disclosed those hidden glories, which appear
To the clear vision of the initiate heart
In contemplation calm, from worldly care apart.

XIII.

Nor lack'd he the profounder, purer sense
Of beauty, in the face of Nature seen;
But loved the mountain's rude magnificence,
The valley's glittering brooks, and pastures green,
Moonlight and morn, and sunset's golden sheen,
The stillness and the storm of lake and sea,
The hedgerow elms, with grass-grown lanes between,
The winding footpath, the broad bowery tree,
The deep, clear river's course, majestically free.

XIV.

Such were his haunts in recreative hours,
To such he fondly turn'd, from time to time,
From Granta's cloister'd courts, and gloomy towers,
And stagnant Camus' circumambient slime;
Well pleased o'er Cambria's mountain-peaks to climb,
Or, with a larger, more adventurous range,
Plant his bold steps on Alpine's heights sublime,
And gaze on Nature's wonders vast and strange;
Then roam through the rich South with swift and ceaseless change.

XV.

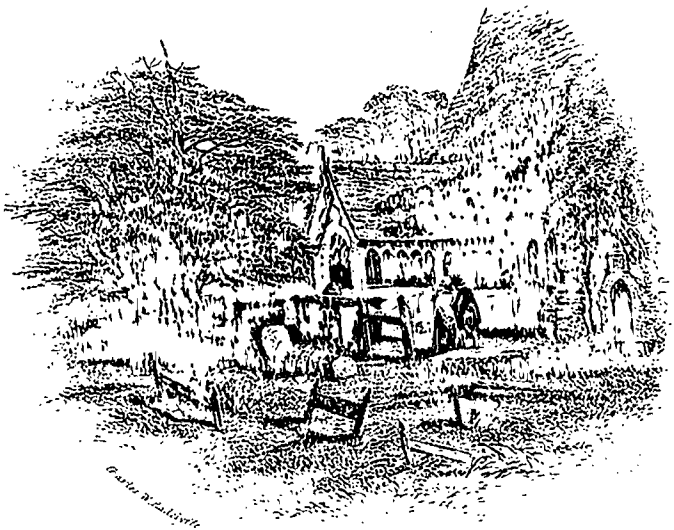
Yet with his settled and habitual mood
Accorded better the green English vale,
The pastoral mead, the cool sequester'd wood,
The spacious park fenced in with rustic pale,
The pleasant interchange of hill and dale,
The church-yard darken'd by the yew-tree's shade,
And rich with many a rudely sculptured tale
Of friends beneath its turf sepulchral laid,
Of human tears that flow, of earthly hopes that fade.

XVI.

Such were the daily scenes with which he fed
The pensive spirit first awoke by thee;
And blest and blameless was the life he led,
Sooth'd by the gentle spells of poesy.
Nor yet averse to stricter thought was he,
Nor uninstructed in abstruser lore;
But now, with draughts of pure philosophy
Quench'd his soul's thirst,—now ventured to explore
The fields by science own'd, and taste the fruits they bore.

XVII.

With many a graceful fold of learned thought
He wrapp'd himself around, well pleased to shroud
His spirit in the web itself had wrought,
From the rude pressure of the boisterous crowd:
Nor loftier purpose cherish'd or avow'd,
Nor claim'd the prophet's or the teacher's praise;
Content in studious ease to be allow'd
With nice artistic craft to weave his lays,
And lose himself at will in song's melodious maze.



XVIII.

Slow to create, fastidious to refine,
He wrought and wrought with labour long and sore,
Adjusting word by word, and line by line,
Each thought, each phrase remoulding o'er and o'er,
Till art could polish and adorn no more,
And stifled fancy sank beneath the load
Of gorgeous words and decorative lore,
In rich profusion on each verse bestow'd,
To grace the shrine wherein the poet's soul abode.

XIX.

And was his mission thus fulfill'd on earth?
For no sublimer use the powers design'd
Which liberal Nature gave him at his birth,
And life-long culture ripen'd and refined?
Owed he no more to Heav'n or to mankind
Than these few notes of desultory song?—
Nay, slight we not Heav'n's boon, nor strive to find
Occasion to impeach the Bard of wrong,
Whose strains, a deathless gift, to us and ours belong!

XX.

If rather for himself, a pilgrim lone
Through this cold world, he sang to cheer his way
And soothe his soul with music all its own,
Than in didactic numbers to convey
Wisdom and truth to minds from both astray,—
If little reck'd he of his task divine,
Man's subject spirit to instruct and sway,—
'Twas that as yet from Poesy's bright shrine
The light which warms our day had scarce begun to shine.

XXI.

Thought hath its changeful periods, like the deep,
Of calm and tempest, tumult and repose;
And 'twas on times of intellectual sleep
That the faint day-spring of his genius rose:
Man's mind lay sunk awhile in slumb'rous doze,
Its surface yet unruffled by the breeze
Which should ere long its hidden depths disclose,
And wake to feverish life of fell disease
New swarms of embryo creeds and crude philosophies.

XXII.

Years came and went;—beside the Poet's tomb
The flowers of many a spring had bloom'd and died,
When times of fierce convulsion, rage, and gloom
Arose, and shook the nations far and wide.
O then, my Mother, by the verdant side
Of thy bright river, lost in dreamy mood,
Was seen a stripling pale and lustrous-eyed,
Who far apart his lonely path pursued,
And seem'd in sullen guise o'er troublous thoughts to brood.

XXIII.

Small sympathy he own'd or felt, I ween,
With sports and pastimes of his young compeers,
Nor mingling in their studies oft was seen,
Nor shared their joys or sorrows, hopes or fears:
Pensive he was, and grave beyond his years,
And happiest seem'd, when in some shady nook
(His wild sad eyes suffused with silent tears)
O'er some mysterious and forbidden book
He pored, until his frame with strong emotion shook.

XXIV.

Strange were his studies, and his sports no less.
Full oft, beneath the blazing summer noon,
The sun's convergent rays, with dire address,
He turn'd on some old tree, and burnt it soon
To ashes; oft at eve the fire balloon,
Inflated by his skill, would mount on high;
And when tempestuous clouds had veil'd the moon,
And lightning rent and thunder shook the sky,
He left his bed, to gaze on Nature's revelry.

XXV.

A great, a gifted, but a turbid soul
Struggled and chafed within that stripling's breast,—
Passion which none might conquer or control,
And feeling too intense to be repress'd;
His spirit was on fire, and could not rest
Through that fierce thirst for perfect truth and love
By which, as by a spell, it seem'd possest;
And long, and oft, and vainly still he strove
To realize on earth what only dwells above.

XXVI.

To him ideal beauty had unveil'd
In blissful vision her immortal face:
Alas! what marvel if on earth he fail'd
The footsteps of that glorious form to trace?
What marvel that to him all things seem'd base,
Disorder'd, and corrupt? and when he sought
Hope for himself, and healing for his race,
Even in the creeds by Christian doctors taught,
How cold to him appear'd the comfort which they brought!

XXVII.

The thing which is, and that which ought to be!—
The gospel and the Church! the precept given,
And act perform'd!—alas! he seem'd to see
Things unlike each to each, as earth to Heaven!
And thus from depth to depth of error driven,
Through truth blasphemed, a devious course he ran,
His brain o'erwrought, his proud heart rent and riven
By bootless strife—a rash misguided man,
Farther from peace at last, than when his quest began.

XXVIII.

Yet in a world of beauty dwelt he still,
Entranced in visions wonderful and bright,
Which by strong magic he evoked at will
From his soul's teeming depths;—no mortal wight
E'er ruled with more supreme resistless might
The wizard realm of fancy; mortal words
Did ne'er such music with such thought unite,
As flow'd beneath his touch from mystic chords,
Whose harmony none wake but song's most gifted lords.

XXIX.

Thus with a prophet's heart, a prophet's tone,
Uttering his fitful oracles he stood
Midst scorn and hatred, dauntless, though alone;
A marvel to the wicked, by the good
Pitied and shunn'd, and where least understood
Most strongly censured.—Peace be with his dust!
Nor be his faults relentlessly pursued
By reprobation of the wise and just,
Who feel themselves but men, and their own hearts distrust.

XXX.

But thou, O nurse and guide of youthful thought,
Wast thou all guiltless of thy son's decline
From wisdom's ways?—was no dark mischief wrought
In that wild heart through any fault of thine?
Didst thou so well perform thy task divine
To him and his compeers—so well instil
By precept upon precept, line on line,
Eternal truth, that Nature's inborn ill
Might not uncheck'd, unchang'd, its wayward course fulfil?

XXXI.

Nay, Mother, veil thy face, and meekly own
Thy much unfaithfulness in years gone by;—
Thy altar cold—Heaven's light but faintly shown—
Truth, in thy charge, itself become a lie,
Which, ev'n to boyhood's unsuspicious eye,
At once lay bare and flagrant.—Well indeed
Might faith and hope beneath thy nurture die,
So rudely oft it crush'd the expanding seed,
And quench'd the smoking flax, and broke the bruised reed.

XXXII.

Those days we trust are ended; and do thou
Take heed lest they return, and thy last state
Be worse than was thy first.—With reverence bow,
Before GOD'S throne, and on His bidding wait:
So be thy sons for ever good and great,

The glory and the strength of this our isle;
And thou still fresh in Time's remotest date,
While Thames shall flow, and thy green meadows smile,
And youthful sports, as now, the youthful heart beguile.

GRAY'S POEMS.

ODE I.

ON THE SPRING.

Lo ! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
  Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
  And wake the purple year !
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of spring :
  While, whisp'ring pleasure as they fly,
  Cool zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
  A broader browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
  O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
  How vain the ardour of the crowd
  How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great !

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
The panting herds repose:
Yet hark, how through the peopled air
The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring,
And float amid the liquid noon:
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
Quick glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of man;
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter through life's little day,
In Fortune's varying colours drest,
Brush'd by the hand of rough mischance,
Or chill'd by age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
The sportive, kind reply:
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic, while 'tis May.

ODE II.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT,

Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes.

'TWAS on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers, that blow;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gaz'd; but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
Betrayed a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretch'd in vain to reach the prize.
What female heart can gold despise?
What cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between:
(Malignant Fate sat by and smiled,)
The slipp'ry verge her feet beguiled,
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mew'd to every wat'ry god,
Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard—
A fav'rite has no friend!

From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wand'ring eyes,
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;
Nor all that glisters gold.

ODE III.

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

"Ανθρωποσ ικανὴ πρόφασισ εἰσ τὸ δυστυχεῖν.
MENANDER.

YE distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the wat'ry glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way!

Ah happy rills! ah pleasing shade!
Ah fields beloved in vain!—
Where once my careless childhood stray'd—
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As, waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames, (for thou hast seen
  Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green,
  The paths of pleasure trace,)
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
  What idle progeny succeed
  To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some, on earnest business bent,
  Their murm'ring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
  To sweeten liberty:
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry:
  Still as they run they look behind,
  They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs, by fancy fed,
  Less pleasing when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
  The sunshine of the breast:
Their's buxom health of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever-new,
And lively cheer of vigour born;
  The thoughtless day, the easy night,
  The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas! regardless of their doom,
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see, how all around 'em wait
The ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murd'rous band!
Ah, tell them they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that skulks behind;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath,
A grisly troop are seen,—
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every labouring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his suff'rings: all are men,
Condemn'd alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet ah! why should they know their fate?
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies.
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more! where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise!

ODE IV.

TO ADVERSITY.

Ζῆνα———
τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδώ-
σαντα, τῷ πάθει μάθος
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν
ÆSCHYL. AGAMEM.

DAUGHTER of Jove, relentless Power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and tort'ring hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thine adamantine chain
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth
Virtue, his darling child, design'd,
To thee he gave the heav'nly birth,
And bade to form her infant mind.
Stern rugged Nurse! thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore:
What sorrow was, thou bad'st her know,
And from her own she learn'd to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,

Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse, and with them go
The summer friend, the flatt'ring foe;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom in sable garb array'd,
Immersed in rapt'rous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye, that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend:
Warm Charity, the general friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh, gently on thy suppliant's head,
Dread goddess, lay thy chast'ning hand!
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Nor circled with the vengeful band,
(As by the impious thou art seen)
With thund'ring voice, and threat'ning mien,
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty.

Thy form benign, oh Goddess, wear,
Thy milder influence impart,
Thy philosophic train be there
To soften, not to wound my heart.
The generous spark extinct revive,
Teach me to love and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a man.

ODE V.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

PINDARIC.

Φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν· ἐς δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἑρμηνέων
χατίζει.

PINDAR, *Olymp.* II.

I. 1.

AWAKE, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:
The laughing flowers, that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour:
The rocks, and nodding groves, rebellow to the roar.

I. 2.

Oh! sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares,
And frantic Passions, hear thy soft control.

On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,
And dropp'd his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

I. 3.

Thee the voice, the dance obey,
Temper'd to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet green
The rosy-crownèd Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day,
With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
  Now in circling troops they meet;
To brisk notes in cadence beating
  Glance their many twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare:
  Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
  In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move
The bloom of young Desire, and purple light of Love.

II. 1.

Man's feeble race what ills await!
  Labour and Penury, the racks of Pain,
  Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!

The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he giv'n in vain the heav'nly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky:
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

II. 2.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the od'rous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
Th' unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

II. 3.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles that crown th' Ægean deep,
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering lab'rinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of anguish?
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around;

Ev'ry shade and hallow'd fountain
  Murmur'd deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
  Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
  And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, oh Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III. 1.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
  In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
  What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
To him the mighty Mother did unveil
Her awful face: The dauntless Child
Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smiled.
"This pencil take," she said, "whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year:
Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!
This can unlock the gates of Joy;
Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic Tears."

III. 2.

Nor second he, that rode sublime
  Upon the seraph wings of Ecstacy,
  The secrets of the abyss to spy.
He pass'd the flaming bounds of Place and Time:
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where angels tremble, while they gaze,
He saw; but blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,

Wide o'er the fields of Glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long resounding pace.

III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
But ah! 'tis heard no more—
Oh! lyre divine, what daring spirit
Wakes thee now? though he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air:
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms, as glitter in the Muse's ray
With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun:
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate;
Beneath the good how far—but far above the great!

ODE VI.

THE BARD.

PINDARIC.

I. 1.

"RUIN seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait!
Though, fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!"
Such were the sounds, that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance:
"To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quiv'ring lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sabled garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood;

(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Stream'd, like a meteor to the troubled air)
And with a master's hand, and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
"Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3.

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hush'd the stormy main:
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topp'd head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries.—
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliff, a grisly band,
I see them sit; they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line."

II. 1.

Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
  The winding-sheet of Edward's race.
Give ample room, and verge enough,
  The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death, through Berkley's roof that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King!
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
  That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
  The scourge of Heav'n! What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II. 2.

Mighty Victor, mighty Lord,
  Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
  A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noon-tide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
  While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
  Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II. 3.

"Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare;
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head!
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread;
The bristled boar in infant-gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er th' accursèd loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1.

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof. The thread is spun.)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)
"Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unbless'd, unpitied, here to mourn:
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.

But oh! what solemn scenes, on Snowdon's height
Descending slow, their glittering skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight!
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All-hail, ye genuine kings! Britannia's issue, hail!

III. 2.

"Girt with many a baron bold,
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old,
In bearded majesty appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line;
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,
Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear!
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as she sings,
Waves in the eye of Heav'n her many-colour'd wings.

III. 3.

"The verse adorn again
Fierce War, and faithful Love,
And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.
In buskin'd measures move
Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.

A voice, as of the cherub-choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me: With joy I see
The different doom our Fates assign.
Be thine Despair, and sceptred Care;
To triumph, and to die, are mine."

He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

ODE VII.

FOR MUSIC.

IRREGULAR.

I.

"HENCE, avaunt, ('tis holy ground)
Comus, and his midnight-crew,
And Ignorance with looks profound,
And dreaming Sloth of pallid hue,
Mad Sedition's cry profane,
Servitude that hugs her chain,
Nor in these consecrated bowers
Let painted Flatt'ry hide her serpent-train in flowers.
Nor Envy base, nor creeping Gain
Dare the Muse's walk to stain,
While bright-eyed Science watches round:
Hence, away, 'tis holy ground!

II.

From yonder realms of empyrean day
Bursts on my ear th' indignant lay:
There sit the sainted sage, the bard divine,
The few, whom Genius gave to shine
Through every unborn age, and undiscovered clime.
Rapt in celestial transport they;
Yet hither oft a glance from high

They send of tender sympathy
To bless the place, where on their opening soul
First the genuine ardour stole.
'Twas Milton struck the deep-toned shell.
And, as the choral warblings round him swell,
Meek Newton's self bends from his state sublime,
And nods his hoary head, and listens to the rhyme.

III.

"Ye brown o'er-arching groves,
That Contemplation loves,
Where willowy Camus lingers with delight!
Oft at the blush of dawn
I trod your level lawn,
Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright
In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
With Freedom by my side, and soft-eyed Melancholy."

IV.

But hark! the portals sound, and pacing forth
With solemn steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of royal birth,
And mitred fathers in long order go:
Great Edward, with the lilies on his brow
From haughty Gallia torn,
And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn
That wept her bleeding love, and princely Clare,
And Anjou's heroine, and the paler Rose,
The rival of her crown and of her woes,
And either Henry there,
The murder'd saint, and the majestic lord,
That broke the bonds of Rome.

(Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,
Their human passions now no more,
Save Charity, that glows beyond the tomb.)
All that on Granta's fruitful plain
Rich streams of regal bounty pour'd,
And bade these awful fanes and turrets rise,
To hail their Fitzroy's festal morning come;
And thus they speak in soft accord
The liquid language of the skies:—

V.

"What is grandeur, what is power?
Heavier toil, superior pain.
What the bright reward we gain?
The grateful memory of the good.
Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee's collected treasures sweet,
Sweet music's melting fall, but sweeter yet
The still small voice of gratitude."

VI.

Foremost and leaning from her golden cloud
The venerable Marg'ret see!
"Welcome, my noble son, (she cries aloud)
To this, thy kindred train, and me:
Pleased in thy lineaments we trace
A Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace.
Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,
The flower unheeded shall descry,
And bid it round heav'n's altars shed
The fragrance of its blushing head:
Shall raise from earth the latent gem,
To glitter on the diadem.

VII.

"Lo! Granta waits to lead her blooming band:
Not obvious, not obstrusive, she
No vulgar praise, no venal incense flings;
Nor dares with courtly tongue refined
Profane thy inborn royalty of mind:
She reveres herself and thee.
With modest pride to grace thy youthful brow
The laureate wreath, that Cecil wore, she brings,
And to thy just, thy gentle hand
Submits the fasces of her sway,
While spirits blest above and men below
Join with glad voice the loud symphonious lay.

VIII.

"Through the wild waves as they roar,
With watchful eye and dauntless mien,
Thy steady course of honour keep,
Nor fear the rocks nor seek the shore:
The star of Brunswick smiles serene,
And gilds the horrors of the deep."

ODE VIII.

THE FATAL SISTERS.

FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.

Now the Storm begins to lower,
(Haste, the loom of Hell prepare,)
Iron-sleet of arrowy shower
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Glitt'ring lances are the loom,
Where the dusky warp we strain,
Weaving many a soldier's doom,
Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane.

See the grisly texture grow,
('Tis of human entrails made,)
And the weights, that play below,
Each a gasping warrior's head.

Shafts for shuttles, dipt in gore,
Shoot the trembling cords along:
Swords, that once a monarch bore,
Keep the tissue close and strong.

Mista, black terrific maid,
Sangrida, and Hilda see,
Join the wayward work to aid:
'Tis the woof of victory.

Ere the ruddy sun be set,
Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
Blade with clattering buckler meet,
Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

(Weave the crimson web of war)
Let us go, and let us fly,
Where our friends the conflict share,—
Where they triumph, where they die.

As the paths of fate we tread,
Wading through th' ensanguined field:
Gondula, and Geira, spread
O'er the youthful king your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give,
Ours to kill, and ours to spare:
Spite of danger he shall live.
(Weave the crimson web of war.)

They, whom once the desert-beach
Pent within its bleak domain,
Soon their ample sway shall stretch
O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless Earl is laid,
Gored with many a gaping wound:
Fate demands a nobler head:
Soon a king shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Eirin weep,
Ne'er again his likeness see;
Long her strains in sorrow steep,
Strains of Immortality!

Horror covers all the heath,
  Clouds of carnage blot the sun.
Sisters, weave the web of death!
  Sisters, cease! the work is done!

Hail the task, and hail the hands!
  Songs of joy and triumph sing!
Joy to the victorious bands;
  Triumph to the younger king.

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,
  Learn the tenor of our song.
Scotland, through each winding vale
  Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed:
  Each her thundering falchion wield;
Each bestride her sable steed.
  Hurry, hurry to the field!

ODE IX.

THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.

UPROSE the King of Men with speed,
And saddled straight his coal-black steed:
Down the yawning steep he rode,
That leads to Hela's drear abode.
Him the Dog of Darkness spied,
His shaggy throat he open'd wide,
While from his jaws, with carnage fill'd,
Foam and human gore distill'd:
Hoarse he bays with hideous din,
Eyes that glow, and fangs that grin:
And long pursues, with fruitless yell,
The father of the powerful spell.
Onward still his way he takes,
(The groaning earth beneath him shakes,)
Till full before his fearless eyes
The portals nine of hell arise.
Right against the eastern gate,
By the moss-grown pile he sate;
Where long of yore to sleep was laid
The dust of the prophetic maid.
Facing to the Northern clime,
Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme;
Thrice pronounced, in accents dread,

The thrilling verse that wakes the dead;
Till from out the hollow ground
Slowly breath'd a sullen sound.

Prophetess. What call unknown, what charms presume
To break the quiet of the tomb?
Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,
And drags me from the realms of night?
Long on these mould'ring bones have beat
The winter's snow, the summer's heat,
The drenching dews and driving rain!
Let me, let me sleep again.
Who is he, with voice unblest,
That calls me from the bed of rest?

Odin. A traveller, to thee unknown,
Is he that calls, a warrior's son.
Thou the deeds of light shalt know;
Tell me what is done below,
For whom yon glittering board is spread,
Drest for whom yon golden bed?

Pr. Mantling in the goblet see
The pure bev'rage of the bee;
O'er it hangs the shield of gold;
'Tis the drink of Balder bold:
Balder's head to death is giv'n.
Pain can reach the sons of heav'n!
Unwilling I my lips unclose:
Leave me, leave me to repose.

O. Once again my call obey:
Prophetess, arise, and say,
What dangers Odin's child await,
Who the author of his fate?

Pr. In Hoder's hand the hero's doom:
His brother sends him to the tomb.
Now my weary lips I close:
Leave me, leave me to repose.

O. Prophetess, my spell obey:
Once again arise, and say,
Who th' avenger of his guilt,
By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt.

Pr. In the caverns of the west,
By Odin's fierce embrace comprest,
A wondrous boy shall Rhinda bear,
Who ne'er shall comb his raven-hair,
Nor wash his visage in the stream,
Nor see the sun's departing beam;
Till he on Hoder's corpse shall smile
Flaming on the fun'ral pile.
Now my weary lips I close:
Leave me, leave me to repose.

O. Yet awhile my call obey:
Prophetess, awake, and say,
What virgins these, in speechless woe,
That bend to earth their solemn brow,

That their flaxen tresses tear,
And snowy veils, that float in air?
Tell me whence their sorrows rose:
Then I leave thee to repose.

Pr. Ha! no traveller art thou,
King of men, I know thee now!
Mightiest of a mighty line——

O. No boding maid of skill divine
Art thou, nor prophetess of good;
But mother of the giant-brood!

Pr. Hie thee hence, and boast at home,
That never shall inquirer come
To break my iron-sleep again;
Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain.
Never, till substantial Night
Has re-assumed her ancient right;
Till wrapp'd in flames, in ruin hurl'd,
Sinks the fabric of the world.

ODE X.

THE TRIUMPHS OF OWEN.

FROM THE WELCH.

OWEN'S praise demands my song,
Owen swift, and Owen strong;
Fairest flower of Roderic's stem,
Gwyneth's shield, and Britain's gem.
He nor heaps his brooded stores,
Nor on all profusely pours;
Lord of every regal art,
Liberal hand, and open heart.

Big with hosts of mighty name,
Squadrons three against him came;
This the force of Eirin hiding,
Side by side as proudly riding,
On her shadow long and gay
Lochlin ploughs the wat'ry way;
There the Norman sails afar
Catch the winds, and join the war:
Black and huge along they sweep,
Burthens of the angry deep.

Dauntless on his native sands
The Dragon-Son of Mona stands

In glitt'ring arms and glory drest,
High he rears his ruby crest.
There the thund'ring strokes begin,
There the press and there the din ;
Talymalfra's rocky shore
Echoing to the battle's roar.
Check'd by the torrent-tide of blood
Backward Meinai rolls his flood ;
While, heap'd his master's feet around,
Prostrate warriors gnaw the ground.
Where his glowing eye-balls turn,
Thousand banners round him burn :
Where he points his purple spear,
Hasty, hasty Rout is there,
Marking with indignant eye
Fear to stop, and Shame to fly.
There Confusion, Terror's child,
Conflict fierce, and Ruin wild,
Agony, that pants for breath,
Despair and honourable Death.

ODE XI.

THE DEATH OF HOEL.

FROM THE WELCH.

HAD I but the torrent's might,
With headlong rage and wild affright
Upon Deïra's squadrons hurl'd,
To rush, and sweep them from the world!

Too, too secure in youthful pride,
By them my friend, my Hoel, died,
Great Cian's son: of Madoc old
He ask'd no heaps of hoarded gold;
Alone in Nature's wealth array'd,
He ask'd, and had the lovely maid.

To Cattraeth's vale in glitt'ring row
Twice two hundred warriors go;
Every warrior's manly neck
Chains of regal honour deck,
Wreath'd in many a golden link:
From the golden cup they drink
Nectar, that the bees produce,
Or the grape's ecstatic juice.
Flush'd with mirth and hope they burn,
But none from Cattraeth's vale return,

Save Aëron brave, and Conan strong,
(Bursting through the bloody throng)
And I, the meanest of them all,
That live to weep and sing their fall.

Have ye seen the tusky boar,
Or the bull, with sullen roar,
On surrounding foes advance?
So Carádoc bore his lance.

Conan's name, my lay, rehearse,
Build to him the lofty verse,
Sacred tribute of the bard,
Verse, the hero's sole reward.
As the flame's devouring force;
As the whirlwind in its course;
As the thunder's fiery stroke,
Glancing on the shiver'd oak;
Did the sword of Conan mow
The crimson harvest of the foe.

SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF MR. RICHARD WEST.

In vain to me the smiling Mornings shine,
And redd'ning Phœbus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant join;
Or chearful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require:
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Yet Morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men:
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear:
To warm their little loves the birds complain:
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear;
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.

EPITAPH I.

ON MRS. CLARKE.

Lo! where this silent marble weeps,
A Friend, a Wife, a Mother sleeps;
A Heart, within whose sacred cell
The peaceful Virtues loved to dwell.
Affection warm, and faith sincere,
And soft humanity, were there.
In agony, in death resign'd,
She felt the wound she left behind.
Her infant Image here below
Sits smiling on a Father's woe:
Whom what awaits, while yet he strays
Along the lonely vale of days?
A Pang, to secret sorrow dear;
A Sigh; an unavailing Tear;
Till Time shall ev'ry grief remove,
With Life, with Memory, and with Love.

EPITAPH II.

ON SIR WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

HERE, foremost in the dangerous paths of fame,
Young Williams fought for England's fair renown;
His mind each Muse, each Grace adorn'd his frame,
Nor Envy dared to view him with a frown.

At Aix his voluntary sword he drew,
There first in blood his infant honour seal'd:
From fortune, pleasure, science, love, he flew;
And scorn'd repose when Britain took the field.

With eyes of flame, and cool undaunted breast,
Victor he stood on Belleisle's rocky steeps—
Ah! gallant youth! this marble tells the rest,
Where melancholy Friendship bends, and weeps.

ELEGY

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds,

Save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

Elston Old Church

The Ivy Mantled Tower

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the Poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or wak'd to ecstacy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton, here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd Dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say—
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

"One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree:
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he:

"The next, with dirges due, in sad array
Slow through the church-yard path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH.

HERE rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown:
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Mis'ry (all he had) a tear,
He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

TRANSLATION FROM STATIUS.

THIRD in the labours of the disc came on,
With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon;
Artful and strong he poised the well-known weight,
By Phlegyas warn'd, and fired by Mnestheus' fate,
That to avoid, and this to emulate.
His vigorous arm he tried before he flung,
Braced all his nerves, and every sinew strung;
Then, with a tempest's whirl and wary eye,
Pursued his cast, and hurl'd the orb on high.
The orb on high, tenacious of its course,
True to the mighty arm that gave it force,
Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see
Its ancient lord secure of victory.
The theatre's green height and woody wall
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall;
The ponderous mass sinks in the cleaving ground,
While vales and woods and echoing hills rebound.
As when from Ætna's smoking summit broke,
The eyeless Cyclops heaved the craggy rock;
Where Ocean frets beneath the dashing oar,
And parting surges round the vessel roar;
'Twas there he aim'd the meditated harm,
And scarce Ulysses scaped his giant arm.
A tiger's pride the victor bore away,
With native spots and artful labour gay;
A shining border round the margin roll'd,
And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold.

Cambridge, May 8, 1736.

SONG.

THYRSIS, when we parted, swore
  Ere the Spring he would return—
Ah! what means yon violet flower,
  And the bud that decks the thorn?
'Twas the lark that upward sprung!
'Twas the nightingale that sung!

Idle notes! untimely green!
  Why this unavailing haste?
Western gales and skies serene
  Speak not always Winter past.
Cease, my doubts, my fears to move;
Spare the honour of my love.

A LONG STORY.

In Britain's isle, no matter where,
An ancient pile of building stands:
The Huntingdons and Hattons there
Employ'd the pow'r of fairy hands

To raise the ceiling's fretted height,
Each panel in achievements clothing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing.

Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
My grave lord-keeper led the brawls;
The seal and maces danced before him.

His bushy beard, and shoe-strings green,
His high-crown'd hat, and satin doublet,
Moved the stout heart of England's queen,
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

What, in the very first beginning!
Shame of the versifying tribe!
Your hist'ry whither are you spinning!
Can you do nothing but describe?

A house there is (and that's enough)
From whence one fatal morning issues
A brace of warriors, not in buff,
But rustling in their silks and tissues.

The first came *cap-à-pie* from France,
Her conquering destiny fulfilling,
Whom meaner beauties eye askance
And vainly ape her art of killing.

The other Amazon kind Heaven
Had arm'd with spirit, wit, and satire;
But Cobham had the polish given,
And tipp'd her arrows with good-nature.

To celebrate her eyes, her air—
Coarse panegyrics would but tease her;
Melissa is her *nom de guerre;*
Alas, who would not wish to please her!

With bonnet blue, and capuchine,
And aprons long, they hid their armour,
And veil'd their weapons, bright and keen,
In pity to the country farmer.

Fame, in the shape of Mr. P—t,
(By this time all the parish know it,)
Had told, that thereabouts there lurk'd
A wicked imp they call a poet:

Who prowl'd the country far and near,
Bewitch'd the children of the peasants,
Dried up the cows, and lamed the deer,
And suck'd the eggs, and kill'd the pheasants.

My lady heard their joint petition,
  Swore by her coronet and ermine,
She'd issue out her high commission
  To rid the manor of such vermin.

The heroines undertook the task;
  Through lanes unknown, o'er styles they ventured.
Rapp'd at the door, nor stay'd to ask,
  But bounce into the parlour enter'd.

The trembling family they daunt,
  They flirt, they sing, they laugh, they tattle,
Rummage his mother, pinch his aunt,
  And upstairs in a whirlwind rattle.

Each hole and cupboard they explore,
  Each creek and cranny of his chamber,
Run hurry-skurry round the floor,
  And o'er the bed and tester clamber;

Into the drawers and china pry,
  Papers and books, a huge imbroglio!
Under a tea-cup he might lie,
  Or creased, like dog's ears, in a folio.

On the first marching of the troops,
  The Muses, hopeless of his pardon,
Convey'd him, underneath their hoops,
  To a small closet in the garden.

So rumour says; (who will, believe?)
  But that they left the door ajar,
Where, safe, and laughing in his sleeve,
  He heard the distant din of war.

Short was his joy. He little knew
The pow'r of magic was no fable;
Out of the window, whisk! they flew,
But left a spell upon the table.

The words too eager to unriddle,
The poet felt a strange disorder;
Transparent bird-lime form'd the middle,
And chains invisible the border.

So cunning was the apparatus,
The powerful pot-hooks did so move him,
That, will-he, nill-he, to the great house
He went, as if the devil drove him.

Yet on his way (no sign of grace,
For folks in fear are apt to pray)
To Phœbus he preferr'd his case,
And begg'd his aid that dreadful day.

The godhead would have back'd his quarrel;
But with a blush, on recollection,
Own'd that his quiver and his laurel
'Gainst four such eyes were no protection.

The court was sate, the culprit there;
Forth from their gloomy mansions creeping,
The Lady Janes and Joans repair,
And from the gallery stand peeping:

Such as in silence of the night
Come (sweep) along some winding entry,
(Styack has often seen the sight,)
Or at the chapel-door stand sentry,

In peakèd hoods and mantles tarnish'd,
Sour visages, enough to scare ye,
High dames of honour once, that garnish'd
The drawing-room of fierce Queen Mary.

The peeress comes. The audience stare,
And doff their hats with due submission:
She curtsies, as she takes her chair,
To all the people of condition.

The bard with many an artful fib
Had in imagination fenced him,
Disproved the arguments of Squib,
And all that Groom could urge against him.

But soon his rhetoric forsook him,
When he the solemn hall had seen;
A sudden fit of ague shook him;
He stood as mute as poor Macleane.

Yet something he was heard to mutter,
"How in the park, beneath an old tree,
(Without design to hurt the butter,
Or any malice to the poultry,)

"He once or twice had penn'd a sonnet,
Yet hoped that he might save his bacon;
Numbers would give their oaths upon it
He ne'er was for a conjuror taken."

The ghostly prudes with haggard face
Already had condemn'd the sinner:
My lady rose, and with a grace——
She smiled, and bade him come to dinner.

"Jesu-Maria! Madam Bridget,
Why, what can the Viscountess mean?"
(Cried the square-hoods in woeful fidget;)
"The times are alter'd quite and clean!

"Decorum's turn'd to mere civility;
Her air and all her manners show it.
Commend me to her affability!
Speak to a commoner and poet!"

[*Here* 500 *stanzas are lost.*]

And so God save our noble king,
And guard us from long-winded lubbers,
That to eternity would sing,
And keep my lady from her rubbers.

POSTHUMOUS POEMS AND FRAGMENTS.

ODE ON THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICISSITUDE.

[Left unfinished by Gray. The additions by Mason are distinguished by inverted commas.]

Now the golden morn aloft
  Waves her dew-bespangled wing,
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
  She woos the tardy spring:
Till April starts, and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground;
And lightly o'er the lively scene
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
  Frisking ply their feeble feet;
Forgetful of their wintry trance,
  The birds his presence greet:
But chief the sky-lark warbles high
His trembling thrilling ecstacy;
And, lessening from the dazzled sight,
Melts into air and liquid light.

Rise, my soul! on wings of fire,
  Rise the rapt'rous choir among;
Hark! 'tis Nature strikes the lyre,
  And leads the gen'ral song:
'Warm let the lyric transport flow,
Warm as the ray that bids it glow;
And animates the vernal grove
With health, with harmony, and love.'

Yesterday the sullen year
  Saw the snowy whirlwind fly;
Mute was the music of the air,
  The herd stood drooping by:
Their raptures now that wildly flow,
No yesterday nor morrow know;
'Tis man alone that joy descries
With forward, and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past misfortune's brow
  Soft reflection's hand can trace;
And o'er the cheek of sorrow throw
  A melancholy grace;
While hope prolongs our happier hour,
Or deepest shades, that dimly lower
And blacken round our weary way,
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still, where rosy pleasure leads,
  See a kindred grief pursue;
Behind the steps that misery treads,
  Approaching comfort view:
The hues of bliss more brightly glow,
Chastis'd by sabler tints of woe;
And blended form, with artful strife,
The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch, that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost,
And breathe and walk again:
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening paradise.

Humble quiet builds her cell,
Near the source whence pleasure flows;
She eyes the clear crystalline well,
And tastes it as it goes.
'While' far below the 'madding' crowd
'Rush headlong to the dangerous flood,'
Where broad and turbulent it sweeps,
'And' perish in the boundless deeps.

Mark where indolence and pride,
'Sooth'd by flattery's tinkling sound,'
Go, softly rolling, side by side,
Their dull but daily round:
'To these, if Hebe's self should bring
The purest cup from pleasure's spring,
Say, can they taste the flavour high
Of sober, simple, genuine joy?

'Mark ambition's march sublime
Up to power's meridian height;
While pale-eyed envy sees him climb,
And sickens at the sight.
Phantoms of danger, death, and dread,
Float hourly round ambition's head;
While spleen, within his rival's breast,
Sits brooding on her scorpion nest.

'Happier he, the peasant, far,
From the pangs of passion free,
That breathes the keen yet wholesome air
Of rugged penury.
He, when his morning task is done,
Can slumber in the noontide sun;
And hie him home, at evening's close,
To sweet repast and calm repose.

'He, unconscious whence the bliss,
Feels, and owns in carols rude,
That all the circling joys are his,
Of dear Vicissitude.
From toils he wins the spirits light,
From busy day the peaceful night;
Rich, from the very want of wealth,
In heaven's best treasures, peace and health.'

AGRIPPINA,

AN UNFINISHED TRAGEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGRIPPINA, *the Empress-mother.*
NERO, *the Emperor.*
POPPÆA, *believed to be in love with* OTHO.
OTHO, *a young man of quality, in love with* POPPÆA.
SENECA, *the Emperor's Preceptor.*
ANICETUS, *Captain of the Guards.*
DEMETRIUS, *the Cynic, friend to* SENECA.
ACERONIA, *Confident to* AGRIPPINA.

SCENE.—*The Emperor's Villa at Baiæ.*

"THE argument drawn out by him, in these two papers (says Mr. Mason, in his edition of Gray), under the idea of a plot and under-plot, I shall here unite; as it will tend to show that the action itself was possessed of sufficient unity.

"The drama opens with the indignation of Agrippina, at receiving her son's orders from Anicetus to remove from Baiæ, and to have her guard taken from her. At this time Otho, having conveyed Poppæa from the house of her husband Rufus Crispinus, brings her to Baiæ, where he means to conceal her among the crowd; or, if his fraud is discovered, to have recourse to the Emperor's authority; but, knowing the lawless temper of Nero, he determines not to have recourse to that expedient but on the utmost necessity. In the mean time he commits her to the care of Anicetus, whom he takes to be his friend, and in whose age he thinks he may safely confide. Nero is not yet come to Baiæ; but Seneca, whom he sends before him, informs Agrippina of the accusation concerning Rubellius Plancus, and desires her to clear herself, which she does briefly; but demands to see her son, who, on his arrival, acquits her of all suspicion, and restores her to her honours. In the mean while,

Anicetus, to whose care Poppæa had been intrusted by Otho, contrives the following plot to ruin Agrippina: He betrays his trust to Otho, and brings Nero, as it were by chance, to the sight of the beautiful Poppæa: the Emperor is immediately struck with her charms, and she, by a feigned resistance, increases his passion; though, in reality, she is from the first dazzled with the prospect of empire, and forgets Otho: she therefore joins with Anicetus in his design of ruining Agrippina, soon perceiving that it will be for her interest. Otho, hearing that the Emperor had seen Poppæa, is much enraged: but not knowing that this interview was obtained through the treachery of Anicetus, is readily persuaded by him to see Agrippina in secret, and acquaint her with his fears that her son Nero would marry Poppæa. Agrippina, to support her own power, and to wean the Emperor from the love of Poppæa, gives Otho encouragement, and promises to support him. Anicetus secretely introduces Nero to hear their discourse; who resolves immediately on his mother's death, and, by Anicetus' means, to destroy her by drowning. A solemn feast, in honour of their reconciliation, is to be made; after which, she being to go by sea to Baufi, the ship is so contrived as to sink or crush her; she escapes by accident, and returns to Baiæ. In this interval Otho has an interview with Poppæa; and being duped a second time by Anicetus and her, determines to fly with her into Greece, by means of a vessel which is to be furnished by Anicetus; but he, pretending to move Poppæa on board in the night, conveys her to Nero's apartment; she then encourages and determines Nero to banish Otho, and finish the horrid deed he had attempted on his mother. Anicetus undertakes to execute his resolves: and, under a pretence of a plot upon the Emperor's life, is sent with a guard to murder Agrippina, who is still at Baiæ in imminent fear, and irresolute how to conduct herself. The account of her death, and the Emperor's horror and fruitless remorse, finishes the drama.

ACT I. SCENE I.

AGRIPPINA. ACERONIA.

AGRIP. 'Tis well, begone! your errand is perform'd,
[*Speaks as to* ANICETUS *entering.*
The message needs no comment. Tell your master,
His mother shall obey him. Say you saw her
Yielding due reverence to his high command:
Alone, unguarded, and without a lictor,

As fits the daughter of Germanicus.
Say, she retir'd to Antium, there to tend
Her households cares, a woman's best employment.
What if you add, how she turn'd pale and trembled;
You think, you spied a tear stand in her eye,
And would have dropp'd, but that her pride restrain'd it?
(Go! you can paint it well) 'twill profit you,
And please the stripling. Yet 'twould dash his joy
To hear the spirit of Britannicus
Yet walks on earth: at least there are who know
Without a spell to raise, and bid it fire
A thousand haughty hearts, unus'd to shake
When a boy frowns, nor to be lured with smiles
To taste of hollow kindness, or partake
His hospitable board: they are aware
Of th' unpledg'd bowl; they love not aconite.

ACER. He's gone: and much I hope these walls alone
And the mute air are privy to your passion.
Forgive your servant's fears, who sees the danger
Which fierce resentment cannot fail to raise
In haughty youth, and irritated power.

AGRIP. And dost thou talk to me, to me of danger,
Of haughty youth and irritated power,
To her that gave it being, her that arm'd
This painted Jove, and taught his novice hand
To aim the forked bolt; while he stood trembling,
Scar'd at the sound, and dazzled with its brightness?
'Tis like, thou hast forgot, when yet a stranger
To adoration, to the grateful steam
Of flattery's incense, and obsequious vows
From voluntary realms, a puny boy,
Deck'd with no other lustre than the blood
Of Agrippina's race, he liv'd unknown
To fame or fortune; haply eyed at distance

Some edileship, ambitious of the power
To judge of weights and measures; scarcely dar'd
On expectation's strongest wing to soar
High as the consulate, that empty shade
Of long-forgotten liberty: when I
Oped his young eye to bear the blaze of greatness;
Shew'd him where empire tower'd, and bade him strike
The noble quarry. Gods! then was the time
To shrink from danger; fear might then have worn
The mask of prudence: but a heart like mine,
A heart that glows with the pure Julian fire,
If bright ambition from her craggy seat
Display the radiant prize, will mount undaunted,
Gain the rough heights, and grasp the dangerous honour.

ACER. Through various life I have pursued your steps,
Have seen your soul, and wonder'd at its daring:
Hence rise my fears. Nor am I yet to learn
How vast the debt of gratitude which Nero
To such a mother owes; the world you gave him
Suffices not to pay the obligation.
I well remember too (for I was present)
When in a secret and dead hour of night,
Due sacrifice perform'd with barb'rous rights
Of mutter'd charms, and solemn invocation,
You bade the Magi call the dreadful powers
That read futurity, to know the fate
Impending o'er your son: their answer was,
"If the son reign, the mother perishes."
Perish (you cried) the mother! reign the son!
He reigns, the rest is heav'n's; who oft has bade,
Ev'n when its will seem'd wrote in lines of blood,
Th' unthought event disclose a whiter meaning.

Think too how oft in weak and sickly minds
The sweets of kindness lavishly indulg'd
Rankle to gall; and benefits, too great
To be repaid, sit heavy on the soul
As unrequited wrongs. The willing homage
Of prostrate Rome, the senate's joint applause,
The riches of the earth, the train of pleasures
That wait on youth, and arbitrary sway—
These were your gift, and with them you bestowed
The very power he has to be ungrateful.

AGRIP. Thus ever grave and undisturb'd reflection
Pour its cool dictates in the madding ear
Of rage, and thinks to quench the fire it feels not.
Say'st thou I must be cautious, must be silent,
And tremble at the phantom I have raised?
Carry to him thy timid counsels. He
Perchance may heed 'em: tell him too, that one
Who had such liberal power to give, may still
With equal power resume that gift, and raise
A tempest that shall shake her own creation
To its original atoms—tell me, say,
This mighty emperor, this dreaded hero,
Has he beheld the glittering front of war?
Knows his soft ear the trumpet's thrilling voice,
And outcry of the battle? Have his limbs
Sweat under iron harness? Is he not
The silken son of dalliance, nurs'd in ease
And pleasure's flow'ry lap?—Rubellius lives,
And Sylla has his friends, though school'd by fear
To bow the supple knee, and court the times
With shows of fair obeisance; and a call,
Like mine might serve belike to wake pretensions
Drowsier than theirs, who boast the genuine blood
Of our imperial house.

ACER. Did I not wish to check this dangerous passion,
I might remind my mistress that her nod
Can rouse eight hardy legions, wont to stem
With stubborn nerves the tide, and face the rigour
Of bleak Germania's snows. Four, not less brave,
That in Armenia quell the Parthian force
Under the warlike Corbulo, by you
Mark'd for their leader: these, by ties confirm'd,
Of old respect and gratitude, are yours.
Surely the Masians too, and those of Egypt,
Have not forgot your sire: the eye of Rome,
And the Prætorian camp have long reverd,
With custom'd awe, the daughter, sister, wife,
And mother of their Cæsars.
AGRIP. Ha! by Juno,
It bears a noble semblance. On this base
My great revenge shall rise; or say we sound
The trump of liberty; there will not want,
Even in the servile senate, ears to own
Her spirit-stirring voice; Soranus there,
And Cassius; Vetus too, and Thrasea,
Minds of the antique cast, rough, stubborn souls,
That struggle with the yoke. How shall the spark
Unquenchable, that glows within their breasts,
Blaze into freedom, when the idle herd
(Slaves from the womb, created but to stare,
And bellow in the Circus) yet will start,
And shake 'em at the name of liberty,
Stung by a senseless word, a vain tradition
As there were magic in it? Wrinkled beldams
Teach it their grandchildren, as somewhat rare
That anciently appear'd, but when, extends
Beyond their chronicle—oh! 'tis a cause
To arm the hand of childhood, and rebrace

The slacken'd sinews of time-wearied age.
Yes, we may meet, ungrateful boy, we may!
Again the buried genius of old Rome
Shall from the dust uprear his reverend head,
Rous'd by the shout of millions: there before
His high tribunal thou and I appear.
Let majesty sit on thy awful brow,
And lighten from thy eye: around thee call
The gilded swarm that wantons in the sunshine
Of thy full favour; Seneca be there,
In gorgeous phrase of labour'd eloquence
To dress thy plea, and Burrhus strengthen it
With his plain soldier's oath, and honest seeming.
Against thee, liberty and Agrippina:
The world the prize; and fair befal the victors.
But soft! why do I waste the fruitless hours
In threats unexecuted? Haste thee, fly
These hated walls, that seem to mock my shame,
And cast me forth in duty to their lord.
ACER. 'Tis time to go, the sun is high advanced,
And, ere mid-day, Nero will come to Baiæ.
AGRIP. My thought aches at him; not the basilisk
More deadly to the sight, than is to me
The cool injurious eye of frozen kindness.
I will not meet its poison. Let him feel
Before he sees me.
ACER. Why then stays my sovereign,
Where he so soon may—
AGRIP. Yes, I will be gone,
But not to Antium—all shall be confess'd,
Whate'er the frivolous tongue of giddy fame
Has spread among the crowd; things, that but whisper'd
Have arch'd the hearer's brow, and riveted
His eyes in fearful ecstacy: no matter

What; so't be strange, and dreadful.—Sorceries,
Assassinations, poisonings—the deeper
My guilt, the blacker his ingratitude.
And you, ye manes of Ambition's victims,
Enshrined Claudius, with the pitied ghosts
Of the Syllani, doom'd to early death,
(Ye unavailing horrors, fruitless crimes!)
If from the realms of night my voice ye hear,
In lieu of penitence, and vain remorse,
Accept my vengeance. Though by me ye bled,
He was the cause. My love, my fears for him,
Dried the soft springs of pity in my heart,
And froze them up with deadly cruelty.
Yet if your injur'd shades demand my fate,
If murder cries for murder, blood for blood,
Let me not fall alone; but crush his pride,
And sink the traitor in his mother's ruin.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. OTHO, POPPÆA.

OTHO. Thus far we're safe. Thanks to the rosy queen
Of amorous thefts: and had her wanton son
Lent us his wings, we could not have beguil'd
With more elusive speed the dazzled sight
Of wakeful jealousy. Be gay securely;
Dispel, my fair, with smiles, the tim'rous cloud
That hangs on thy clear brow. So Helen look'd,
So her white neck reclined, so she was borne
By the young Trojan to his gilded bark
With fond reluctance, yielding modesty,
And oft-reverted eye, as if she knew not
Whether she fear'd, or wish'd to be pursued.

* * * * *

HYMN TO IGNORANCE.

A FRAGMENT.

HAIL, Horrors, hail! ye ever gloomy bowers,
Ye Gothic fanes, and antiquated towers,
Where rushy Camus' slowly-winding flood
Perpetual draws his humid train of mud:
Glad I revisit thy neglected reign,
Oh take me to thy peaceful shade again.

But chiefly thee, whose influence, breath'd from high,
Augments the native darkness of the sky;
Ah, Ignorance! soft salutary power!
Prostrate with filial reverence I adore.
Thrice hath Hyperion roll'd his annual race,
Since weeping I forsook thy fond embrace.
Oh say, successful dost thou still oppose
Thy leaden ægis 'gainst our ancient foes?
Still stretch, tenacious of thy right divine,
The massy sceptre o'er thy slumb'ring line?
And dews Lethean through the land dispense
To steep in slumbers each benighted sense?
If any spark of wit's delusive ray
Break out, and flash a momentary day,
With damp, cold touch forbid it to aspire,
And huddle up in fogs the dangerous fire.

Oh say—she hears me not, but careless grown,
Lethargic nods upon her ebon throne.
Goddess! awake, arise! alas my fears!
Can powers immortal feel the force of years?
Not thus of old, with ensigns wide unfurl'd,
She rode triumphant o'er the vanquish'd world;
Fierce nations own'd her unresisted might,
And all was ignorance, and all was night.

Oh sacred age! Oh times for ever lost!
(The schoolman's glory, and the churchman's boast.)
For ever gone—yet still to fancy new,
Her rapid wings the transient scene pursue,
And bring the buried ages back to view.

High on her car, behold the grandam ride,
Like old Sesostris, with barbaric pride;
* * * a team of harness'd monarchs bend——

THE

ALLIANCE OF EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT.

A FRAGMENT.

ESSAY I.

——Πόταγ', ὦ 'γαθέ· τὰν γὰρ ἀοιδὰν
Οὔτι κα εἰς 'Αΐδαν γα τὸν ἐκλελάθοντα φυλαξεῖς.
THEOCRITUS, ID. I. 63.

As sickly plants betray a niggard earth,
Whose barren bosom starves her generous birth,
Nor genial warmth, nor genial juice retains,
Their roots to feed, and fill their verdant veins;
And as in climes, where winter holds his reign,
The soil, though fertile, will not teem in vain,
Forbids her gems to swell, her shades to rise,
Nor trust her blossoms to the churlish skies:
So draw mankind in vain the vital airs,
Unform'd, unfriended, by those kindly cares,
That health and vigour to the soul impart,
Spread the young thought, and warm the opening heart:
So fond instruction on the growing powers
Of nature idly lavishes her stores,
If equal justice with unclouded face
Smile not indulgent on the rising race,
And scatter with a free, though frugal hand,
Light golden showers of plenty o'er the land:

But Tyranny has fix'd her empire there,
To check their tender hopes with chilling fear,
And blast the blooming promise of the year.
  This spacious animated scene survey,
From where the rolling orb, that gives the day,
His sable sons with nearer course surrounds
To either pole, and life's remotest bounds.
How rude soe'er th' exterior form we find,
Howe'er opinion tinge the varied mind,
Alike to all, the kind impartial heav'n
The sparks of truth and happiness has giv'n:
With sense to feel, with memory to retain,
They follow pleasure, and they fly from pain;
Their judgment mends the plan their fancy draws,
The event presages, and explores the cause;
The soft returns of gratitude they know,
By fraud elude, by force repel the foe;
While mutual wishes, mutual woes endear
The social smile, the sympathetic tear.
  Say, then, through ages by what fate confin'd
To different climes seem different souls assign'd?
Here measured laws and philosophic ease
Fix, and improve the polish'd arts of peace;
There industry and gain their vigils keep,
Command the winds, and tame th' unwilling deep:
Here force and hardy deeds of blood prevail;
There languid pleasure sighs in every gale.
Oft o'er the trembling nations from afar
Has Scythia breath'd the living cloud of war;
And, where the deluge burst, with sweepy sway
Their arms, their kings, their gods were roll'd away.
As oft have issued, host impelling host,
The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast.
The prostrate south to the destroyer yields

Her boasted titles, and her golden fields:
With grim delight the brood of winter view
A brighter day, and heav'ns of azure hue;
Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows.
Proud of the yoke, and pliant to the rod,
Why yet does Asia dread a monarch's nod,
While European freedom still withstands
Th' encroaching tide that drowns her lessening lands;
And sees far off, with an indignant groan,
Her native plains, and empires once her own?
Can opener skies and suns of fiercer flame
O'erpower the fire that animates our frame;
As lamps, that shed at eve a cheerful ray,
Fade and expire beneath the eye of day?
Need we the influence of the northern star
To string our nerves and steel our hearts to war?
And, where the face of nature laughs around,
Must sick'ning virtue fly the tainted ground?
Unmanly thought! what seasons can control,
What fancied zone can circumscribe the soul,
Who, conscious of the source from whence she springs
By reason's light, on resolution's wings,
Spite of her frail companion, dauntless goes
O'er Libya's deserts and through Zembla's snows?
She bids each slumb'ring energy awake,
Another touch, another temper take,
Suspends th' inferior laws that rule our clay:
The stubborn elements confess her sway;
Their little wants, their low desires refine,
And raise the mortal to a height divine.
Not but the human fabric from the birth
Imbibes a flavour of its parent earth:
As various tracts enforce a various toil,

The manners speak the idiom of their soil.
An iron race the mountain-cliffs maintain,
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain;
For where unwearied sinews must be found
With side-long plough to quell the flinty ground,
To turn the torrent's swift-descending flood,
To brave the savage rushing from the wood,
What wonder if, to patient valour train'd,
They guard with spirit what by strength they gain'd;
And while their rocky ramparts round they see,
The rough abode of want and liberty,
(As lawless force from confidence will grow,)
Insult the plenty of the vales below?
What wonder, in the sultry climes, that spread
Where Nile redundant o'er his summer-bed
From his broad bosom life and verdure flings,
And broods o'er Egypt with his wat'ry wings,
If with advent'rous oar and ready sail
The dusky people drive before the gale;
Or on frail floats to neighb'ring cities ride,
That rise and glitter o'er the ambient tide.

* * * * *

Commentary on the last fragmentary Poem.

THE author's subject being (as we have seen) *The necessary alliance between a good form of government and a good mode of education, in order to produce the happiness of mankind*, the Poem opens with two similes—an uncommon kind of exordium; but which, I suppose, the poet intentionally chose, to intimate the analogical method he meant to pursue in his subsequent reasonings. First, he asserts, that men without education are like sickly plants in a cold or barren soil (*lines* 1 to 5, and 8 to 12); and, secondly, he compares them, when unblest with a just and well-regulated government, to plants that will not blossom or bear fruit in an unkindly and inclement air (*l.* 5 to 9, and *l.* 13 to 22). Having thus laid

down the two propositions he means to prove, he begins by examining into the characteristics which (taking a general view of mankind) all men have in common one with another (*l.* 22 to 39); they covet pleasure and avoid pain (*l.* 31); they feel gratitude for benefits (*l.* 34), they desire to avenge wrongs, which they effect either by force or cunning (*l.* 35); they are linked to each other by their common feelings, and participate in sorrow and in joy (*l.* 36, 37). If, then, all the human species agree in so many moral particulars, whence arises the diversity of national characters? This question the poet puts at *line* 38, and dilates upon to *l.* 64. Why, says he, have some nations shown a propensity to commerce and industry; others to war and rapine; others to ease and pleasure (*l.* 42 to 46)? Why have the northern people overspread, in all ages, and prevailed over the southern (*l.* 46 to 58)? Why has Asia been, time out of mind, the seat of despotism, and Europe that of freedom (*l.* 59 to 64)? Are we from these instances to imagine men necessarily enslaved to the inconveniences of the climate where they were born (*l.* 64 to 72)? Or are we not rather to suppose there is a natural strength in the human mind that is able to vanquish and break through them (*l.* 72 to 84)? It is confessed, however, that men receive an early tincture from the situation they are placed in, and the climate which produces them (*l.* 84 to 88). Thus the inhabitants of the mountains, inured to labour and patience, are naturally trained to war (*l.* 88 to 96), while those of the plain are more open to any attack, and softened by ease and plenty (*l.* 96 to 99). Again, the Egyptians, from the nature of their situation, might be the inventors of home navigation, from a necessity of keeping up an intercourse between their towns during the inundation of the Nile (*l.* 99 to ***). hose persons would naturally have the first turn to commerce who inhabited a barren coast, like the Tyrians, and were persecuted by some neighbouring tyrant; or were driven to take refuge on some shoals, like the Venetian and Hollander; their discovery of some rich island, in the infancy of the world, described. The Tartar, hardened to war by his rigorous climate and pastoral life, and by his disputes for water and herbage in a country without land-marks, as also by skirmishes between his rival clans, was consequently fitted to conquer his rich southern neighbours, whom ease and luxury had enervated; yet this is no proof that liberty and valour may not exist in southern climes, since the Syrians and Carthaginians gave noble instances of both; and the Arabians carried their conquests as far as the Tartars. Rome also (for many centuries) repulsed those very nations, which, when she grew weak, at length demolished her extensive empire.

STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY.

A FRAGMENT.

IN silent gaze the tuneful choir among,
Half pleas'd, half blushing, let the Muse admire,
While Bentley leads her sister-art along,
And bids the pencil answer to the lyre.

See, in their course, each transitory thought,
Fix'd by his touch, a lasting essence take;
Each dream, in fancy's airy colouring wrought,
To local symmetry and life awake!

The tardy rhymes that us'd to linger on,
To censure cold, and negligent of fame,
In swifter measures animated run,
And catch a lustre from his genuine flame.

Ah! could they catch his strength, his easy grace,
His quick creation, his unerring line;
The energy of Pope they might efface,
And Dryden's harmony submit to mine.

But not to one in this benighted age
Is that diviner inspiration giv'n,
That burns in Shakespeare's or in Milton's page,
The pomp and prodigality of heav'n.

As when conspiring in the diamond's blaze,
The meaner gems that singly charm the sight,
Together dart their intermingled rays,
And dazzle with a luxury of light.

Enough for me, if to some feeling breast
My lines a secret sympathy 'impart;'
And as their pleasing influence 'flows confest,'
A sigh of soft reflection 'heaves the heart.'

* * * * * *

SKETCH OF HIS OWN CHARACTER.

WRITTEN IN 1761, AND FOUND IN ONE OF HIS OWN POCKET-BOOKS.

Too poor for a bribe, and too proud to importune,
He had not the method of making a fortune:
Could love and could hate, so was thought somewhat odd;
No very great wit;—he believed in a God.
A post or a pension he did not desire,
But left Church and State to Charles Townshend and Squire.

AMATORY LINES.

WITH beauty, with pleasure surrounded, to languish—
To weep, without knowing the cause of my anguish ;
To start from short slumbers, and wish for the morning—
To close my dull eyes when I see it returning ;
Sighs sudden and frequent, looks ever dejected—
Words that steal from my tongue, by no means connected !
Ah ! say, fellow-swains, how these symptoms befell me ?
They smile, but reply not—sure Delia will tell me !

EXTRACTS.

PROPERTIUS, LIB. III. ELEG. V. *v.* 19.

"Me juvat in prima coluisse Helicona juventa," &c.

IMITATED.

LONG as of youth the joyous hours remain,
Me may Castalia's sweet recess detain,
Fast by the umbrageous vale lull'd to repose,
Where Aganippe warbles as it flows;
Or roused by sprightly sounds from out the trance,
I'd in the ring knit hands, and join the Muses' dance.
Give me to send the laughing bowl around,
My soul in Bacchus' pleasing fetters bound;
Let on this head unfading flowers reside,
There bloom the vernal rose's earliest pride;
And when, our flames commissioned to destroy,
Age step 'twixt Love and me, and intercept the joy;
When my changed head these locks no more shall know,
And all its jetty honours turn to snow;
Then let me rightly spell of Nature's ways;
To Providence, to HIM my thoughts I'd raise,
Who taught this vast machine its stedfast laws,
That first, eternal, universal Cause;
Search to what regions yonder star retires
That monthly waning hides her paly fires,

And whence, anew revived, with silver light
Relumes her crescent orb to cheer the dreary night:
How rising winds the face of ocean sweep,
Where lie th' eternal fountains of the deep,
And whence the cloudy magazines maintain
Their wintry war, or pour the autumnal rain;
How flames perhaps, with dire confusion hurl'd,
Shall sink this beauteous fabric of the world;
What colours paint the vivid arch of Jove;
What wondrous force the solid earth can move,
When Pindus' self approaching ruin dreads,
Shakes all his pines, and bows his hundred heads;
Why does yon orb, so exquisitely bright,
Obscure his radiance in a short-lived night;
Whence the Seven Sisters' congregated fires,
And what Boötes' lazy waggon tires;
How the rude surge its sandy bounds control;
Who measured out the year, and bade the seasons roll;
If realms beneath those fabled torments know,
Pangs without respite, fires that ever glow,
Earth's monster brood stretch'd on their iron bed,
The hissing terrors round Alecto's head,
Scarce to nine acres Tityus' bulk confined,
The triple dog that scares the shadowy kind,
All angry heaven inflicts, or hell can feel,
The pendent rock, Ixion's whirling wheel,
Famine at feasts, or thirst amid the stream;
Or are our fears the enthusiast's empty dream,
And all the scenes, that hurt the grave's repose,
But pictured horror and poetic woes.

These soft inglorious joys my hours engage;
Be love my youth's pursuit, and science crown my age.

PROPERTIUS, LIB. II. ELEG. I. *v.* 17.

"Quod mihi si tantum, Mæcenas, fata dedissent," &c.

YET would the tyrant Love permit me raise
My feeble voice, to sound the victor's praise,
To paint the hero's toil, the ranks of war,
The laurell'd triumph and the sculptur'd car;
No giant race, no tumult of the skies,
No mountain-structures in my verse should rise,
Nor tale of Thebes, nor Ilium there should be,
Nor how the Persian trod the indignant sea;
Not Marius' Cimbrian wreaths would I relate,
Nor lofty Carthage struggling with her fate.
Here should Augustus great in arms appear,
And thou, Mæcenas, be my second care;
Here Mutina from flames and famine free,
And there the ensanguined wave of Sicily,
And scepter'd Alexandria's captive shore,
And sad Philippi, red with Roman gore:
Then, while the vaulted skies loud ios rend,
In golden chains should loaded monarchs bend,
And hoary Nile with pensive aspect seem
To mourn the glories of his sevenfold stream;
While prows, that late in fierce encounter met,
Move through the sacred way and vainly threat.
Thee too the Muse should consecrate to fame,
And with her garlands weave thy ever-faithful name.
But nor Callimachus' enervate strain
May tell of Jove, and Phlegra's blasted plain;

Nor I with unaccustomed vigour trace
Back to its source divine the Julian race.
Sailors to tell of winds and seas delight,
The shepherd of his flocks, the soldier of the fight;
A milder warfare I in verse display;
Each in his proper art should waste the day:
Nor thou my gentle calling disapprove,
To die is glorious in the bed of Love.
Happy the youth, and not unknown to fame,
Whose heart has never felt a second flame.
Oh, might that envied happiness be mine!
To Cynthia all my wishes I confine:
Or if, alas! it be my fate to try
Another love, the quicker let me die:
But she, the mistress of my faithful breast,
Has oft the charms of constancy confest,
Condemns her fickle sex's fond mistake,
And hates the tale of Troy for Helen's sake.
Me from myself the soft enchantress stole;
Ah! let her ever my desires control;
Or if I fall the victim of her scorn,
From her loved door may my pale corse be borne.
The power of herbs can other harms remove,
And find a cure for every ill, but love.
The Lemnian's hurt Machaon could repair,
Heal the slow chief, and send again to war;
To Chiron Phœnix owed his long-lost sight,
And Phœbus' son recall'd Androgeon to the light.
Here arts are vain, e'en magic here must fail,
The powerful mixture and the midnight spell;
The hand that can my captive heart release,
And to this bosom give its wonted peace,
May the long thirst of Tantalus allay,
Or drive the infernal vulture from his prey.

For ills unseen what remedy is found?
Or who can probe the undiscover'd wound?
The bed avails not, nor the leech's care,
Nor changing skies can hurt, nor sultry air.
'Tis hard th' elusive symptoms to explore:
To-day the lover walks, to-morrow is no more:
A train of mourning friends attend his pall,
And wonder at the sudden funeral.
When then the fates that breath they gave shall claim
And the short marble but preserve a name,
A little verse my all that shall remain;
Thy passing courser's slackened speed restrain;
(Thou envied honour of thy poet's days,
Of all our youth the ambition and the praise!)
Then to my quiet urn awhile draw near,
And say, while o'er that place you drop the tear,
Love and the fair were of his youth the pride:
He lived, while she was kind; and when she frown'd, he died.

TASSO, GERUS, LIB. CANT. XIV. ST. 32.

"Preser commiato, e sì 'l desio gli sprona," &c.

DISMISS'D at length, they break through all delay,
To tempt the dangers of the doubtful way;
And first to Ascalon their steps they bend,
Whose walls along the neighbouring sea extend,
Nor yet in prospect rose the distant shore;
Scarce the hoarse waves from far were heard to roar,
When thwart the road a river roll'd its flood
Tempestuous, and all further course withstood;
The torrent stream his ancient bounds disdains,
Swoll'n with new force, and late descending rains.
Irresolute they stand; when lo, appears
The wondrous Sage: vigorous he seem'd in years,
Awful his mien, low as his feet there flows
A vestment unadorn'd, though white as new-fall'n snows;
Against the stream the waves secure he trod,
His head a chaplet bore, his hand a rod.
  As on the Rhine, when Boreas' fury reigns,
And winter binds the floods in icy chains,
Swift shoots the village-maid in rustic play
Smooth, without step, adown the shining way,
Fearless in long excursion loves to glide,
And sports and wantons o'er the frozen tide—
So mov'd the Seer, but on no harden'd plain;
The river boil'd beneath, and rush'd toward the main.

Where fix'd in wonder stood the warlike pair,
His course he turn'd, and thus reliev'd their care :—
"Vast, oh my friends, and difficult the toil
To seek your hero in a distant soil!
No common helps, no common guide ye need ;
Art it requires, and more than wingèd speed.
What length of sea remains, what various lands,
Oceans unknown, inhospitable sands!
For adverse fate the captive chief has hurl'd
Beyond the confines of our narrow world :
Great things and full of wonder in your ears
I shall unfold ; but first dismiss your fears ;
Nor doubt with me to tread the downward road
That to the grotto leads, my dark abode."
Scarce had he said, before the warriors' eyes,
When mountain-high the waves disparted rise ;
The flood on either hand its billows rears,
And in the midst a spacious arch appears.
Their hands he seized, and down the steep he led
Beneath the obedient river's inmost bed ;
The watery glimmerings of a fainter day
Discover'd half, and half conceal'd their way ;
As when athwart the dusky woods by night
The uncertain crescent gleams a sickly light.
Through subterraneous passages they went,
Earth's inmost cells, and caves of deep descent ;
Of many a flood they view'd the secret source,
The birth of rivers rising to their course,
Whate'er with copious train its channel fills,
Floats into lakes, and bubbles into rills ;
The Po was there to see, Danubius' bed,
Euphrates' fount, and Nile's mysterious head.
Further they pass, where ripening minerals flow,
And embryon metals undigested glow,

Sulphureous veins and living silver shine,
Which soon the parent sun's warm powers refine,
In one rich mass unite the precious store,
The parts combine and harden into ore:
Here gems break through the night with glittering beam,
And paint the margin of the costly stream,
All stones of lustre shoot their vivid ray,
And mix attemper'd in a various day;
Here the soft emerald smiles, of verdant hue,
And rubies flame, with sapphire's heavenly blue,
The diamond there attracts the wondrous sight,
Proud of its thousand dyes and luxury of light.

DE PRINCIPIIS COGITANDI.

ILLE sub umbrosæ qui stratus frondibus ulmi
Cantavit fastos ruricolasque senes;
Et quos concipiant juvenilia pectora sensus;
Ut varia tumeant spe trepidentque metu;
Et spirare ausus fidibus graviora Britannis
Pindarico grandes protulit ore modos:
Idem etiam ingenio penetravit condita rerum,
Naturæ cæcas introiitque vias;
Nec metuit versu puer illustrare Latino
Arcanos Sophiæ difficilesque locos.
Explicuit doctus quo tandem percita motu
Incipiat vires mens agitare suas:
Quo derivetur primum edita fonte potestas
Illa sagax animi mirificusque vigor.
Inter Etonenses conscriptus nempe catervas,
Cum vernos ageret jam tener ille dies,
Ingenium angustos intra compescere fines
Sprevit, et audaci ponere frœna fugæ;
Vulgaresque sequi puer indignatus honores,
Materie struxit nobiliore modos.

Doctus Socratici quid pagina ferret alumni,
  Discipuloque daret quas Academus opes,
Corporeo victor resolutus carcere, mentis
  Excursu voluit liberiore frui.
Ergo Pieriam dignus gestare coronam
  Romano vates Anglus honore nitet;
Ingenioque potens et magno carmine, sedes
  Nomen ad æthereas tollit, Etona, tuum!

W. G. C.

ETONÆ,
MDCCCXLV.

DE PRINCIPIIS COGITANDI.

LIBER PRIMUS.

AD FAVONIUM.

UNDE Animus scire incipiat: quibus inchoet orsa
Principiis seriem rerum, tenuemque catenam
Mnemosyne; Ratio unde rudi sub pectore tardum
Augeat imperium; et primum mortalibus ægris
Ira, Dolor, Metus, et Curæ nascantur inanes,
Hinc canere aggredior. Nec dedignare canentem,
O decus! Angliacæ certe O lux altera gentis!
Si qua primus iter monstras, vestigia conor
Signare incerta, tremulaque insistere planta.
Quin potius duc ipse (potes namque omnia) sanctum
Ad limen, (si rite adeo, si pectore puro,)
Obscuræ reserans Naturæ ingentia claustra.
Tu cæcas rerum causas, fontemque severum
Pande, Pater; tibi enim, tibi, veri magne Sacerdos,
Corda patent hominum, atque altæ penetralia Mentis.
Tuque aures adhibe vacuas, facilesque, Favoni,
(Quod tibi crescit opus) simplex nec despice carmen,
Nec vatem: non illa leves primordia motus,
Quanquam parva, dabunt. Lætum vel amabile quicquid
Usquam oritur, trahit hinc ortum; nec surgit ad auras,
Quin ea conspirent simul, eventusque secundent.
Hinc variæ vitæ artes, ac mollior usus,
Dulce et amicitiæ vinclum: Sapientia dia
Hinc roseum accendit lumen, vultuque sereno

Humanas aperit mentes, nova gaudia monstrans,
Deformesque fugat curas, vanosque timores:
Scilicet et rerum crescit pulcherrima Virtus.
Illa etiam, quæ te (mirum!) noctesque diesque
Assidue fovet inspirans, linguamque sequentem
Temperat in numeros, atque horas mulcet inertes;
Aurea non alia se jactat origine Musa.
  Principio, ut magnum fœdus Natura creatrix
Firmavit, tardis jussitque inolescere membris
Sublimes animas; tenebroso in carcere partem
Noluit ætheream longo torpere veterno:
Nec per se proprium passa exercere vigorem est,
Ne sociæ molis conjunctos sperneret artus,
Ponderis oblita, et cœlestis conscia flammæ.
Idcirco innumero ductu tremere undique fibras
Nervorum instituit: tum toto corpore miscens
Implicuit late ramos, et sensile textum,
Implevitque humore suo (seu lympha vocanda,
Sive aura est) tenuis certe, atque levissima quædam
Vis versatur agens, parvosque infusa canales
Perfluit; assidue externis quæ concita plagis,
Mobilis, incussique fidelis nuntia motus,
Hinc inde accensa contage relabitur usque
Ad superas hominis sedes, arcemque cerebri.
Namque illic posuit solium, et sua templa sacravit
Mens animi: hanc circum coëunt, densoque feruntur
Agmine notitiæ, simulacraque tenuia rerum:
Ecce autem naturæ ingens aperitur imago
Immensæ, variique patent commercia mundi.
  Ac uti longinquis descendunt montibus amnes
Velivolus Tamesis, flaventisque Indus arenæ,
Euphratesque, Tagusque, et opimo flumine Ganges,
Undas quisque suas volvens, cursuque sonoro
In mare prorumpunt: hos magno acclinis in antro

Excipit Oceanus, natorumque ordine longo
Dona recognoscit venientum, ultroque serenat
Cæruleam faciem, et diffuso marmore ridet.
Haud aliter species properant se inferre novellæ
Certatim menti, atque aditus quino agmine complent.
Primas tactus agit partes, primusque minutæ
Laxat iter cæcum turbæ, recipitque ruentem.
Non idem huic modus est, qui fratribus: amplius ille
Imperium affectat senior, penitusque medullis,
Visceribusque habitat totis, pellisque recentem
Funditur in telam, et late per stamina vivit.
Necdum etiam matris puer eluctatus ab alvo
Multiplices solvit tunicas, et vincula rupit;
Sopitus molli somno, tepidoque liquore
Circumfusus adhuc: tactus tamen aura lacessit
Jamdudum levior sensus, animamque reclusit.
Idque magis simul, ac solitum blandumque calorem
Frigore mutavit cœli, quod verberat acri
Impete inassuetos artus: tum sævior adstat,
Humanæque comes vitæ Dolor excipit: ille
Cunctantem frustra et tremulo multa ore querentem
Corripit invadens, ferreisque amplectitur ulnis.
Tum species primum patefacta est candida Lucis
(Usque vices adeo Natura bonique, malique,
Exæquat, justaque manu sua damna rependit)
Tum primum, ignotosque bibunt nova lumina soles.
Carmine quo, Dea, te dicam, gratissima cœli
Progenies, ortumque tuum: gemmantia rore
Ut per prata levi lustras, et floribus halans
Purpureum Veris gremium, scenamque virentem
Pingis, et umbriferos colles, et cærula regna?
Gratia te, Venerisque Lepos, et mille Colorum,
Formarumque chorus sequitur, Motusque decentes.
At caput invisum Stygiis Nox atra tenebris

Abdidit, horrendæque simul Formidinis ora,
Pervigilesque æstus Curarum, atque anxius Angor:
Undique Lætitia florent mortalia corda,
Purus et arridet largis fulgoribus Æther.
Omnia nec tu ideo invalidæ se pandere Menti
(Quippe nimis teneros posset vis tanta diei
Perturbare, et inexpertos confundere visus)
Nec capere infantes animos, neu cernere credas
Tam variam molem, et miræ spectacula lucis:
Nescio qua tamen hæc oculos dulcedine parvos
Splendida percussit novitas, traxitque sequentes;
Nonne videmus enim, latis inserta fenestris
Sicubi se Phœbi dispergant aurea tela,
Sive lucernarum rutilus colluxerit ardor,
Extemplo huc obverti aciem, quæ fixa repertos
Haurit inexpletum radios, fruiturque tuendo.
Altior huic vero sensu, majorque videtur
Addita, Judicioque arcte connexa potestas,
Quod simul atque ætas volventibus auxerit annis,
Hæc simul, assiduo depascens omnia visu,
Perspiciet, vis quanta loci, quid polleat ordo,
Juncturæ quis honos, ut res accendere rebus
Lumina conjurant nter se, et mutua fulgent.
Nec minor in geminis viget auribus insita virtus,
Nec tantum in curvis quæ pervigil excubet antris
Hinc atque hinc (ubi Vox tremefecerit ostia pulsu
Aëriis invecta rotis) longeque recurset:
Scilicet Eloquio hæc sonitus, hæc fulminis alas,
Et mulcere dedit dictis et tollere corda,
Verbaque metiri numeris, versuque ligare
Repperit, et quicquid discant Libethrides undæ,
Calliope quoties, quoties Pater ipse canendi
Evolvat liquidum carmen, calamove loquenti
Inspiret dulces animas, digitisque figuret.

At medias fauces, et linguæ humentia templa
Gustus habet, qua se insinuet jucunda saporum
Luxuries, dona Autumni, Bacchique voluptas.
Naribus interea consedit odora hominum vis,
Docta leves captare auras Panchaïa quales
Vere novo exhalat, Floræve quod oscula fragrant
Roscida, cum Zephyri furtim sub vesperis hora
Respondet votis, mollemque aspirat amorem.
Tot portas altæ capitis circumdedit arci
Alma Parens, sensusque vias per membra reclusit;
Haud solas: namque intus agit vivata facultas,
Qua sese explorat, contemplatusque repente
Ipse suas animus vires, momentaque cernit.
Quid velit, aut possit, cupiat, fugiatve, vicissim
Percipit imperio gaudens; neque corpora fallunt
Morigera ad celeres actus, ac numina mentis.
Qualis Hamadryadum quondam si forte sororum
Una, novos peregrans saltus, et devia rura;
(Atque illam in viridi suadet procumbere ripa
Fontis pura quies, et opaci frigoris umbra)
Dum prona in latices speculi de margine pendet,
Mirata est subitam venienti occurrere Nympham:
Mox eosdem, quos ipsa, artus, eadem ora gerentem
Una inferre gradus, una succedere sylvæ
Aspicit alludens; seseque agnoscit in undis.
Sic sensu interno rerum simulacra suarum
Mens ciet, et proprios observat conscia vultus.
Nec vero simplex ratio, aut jus omnibus unum
Constat imaginibus. Sunt quæ bina ostia norunt;
Hæ privos servant aditus; sine legibus illæ
Passim, qua data porta, ruunt, animoque propinquant.
Respice, cui a cunis tristes extinxit ocellos,
Sæva et in æternas mersit natura tenebras:
Illi ignota dies lucet, vernusque colorum

Offusus nitor est, et vivæ gratia formæ.
Corporis at filum, et motus, spatiumque, locique
Intervalla datur certo dignoscere tactu:
Quandoquidem his iter ambiguum est, et janua duplex,
Exclusæque oculis species irrumpere tendunt
Per digitos. Atqui solis concessa potestas
Luminibus blandæ est radios immittere lucis.
Undique proporro sociis, quacunque patescit
Notitiæ campus, mistæ lasciva feruntur
Turba voluptatis comites, formæque dolorum
Terribiles visu, et porta glomerantur in omni.
Nec vario minus introitu magnum ingruit illud,
Quo facere et fungi, quo res existere circum
Quamque sibi proprio cum corpore scimus, et ire
Ordine, perpetuoque per ævum flumine labi.
Nunc age quo valeat pacto, qua sensilis arte
Affectare viam, atque animi tentare latebras
Materies (dictis aures adverte faventes)
Exsequar. Imprimis spatii quam multa per æquor
Millia multigenis pandant se corpora seclis,
Expende. Haud unum invenies, quod mente licebit
Amplecti, nedum propius deprendere sensu,
Molis egens certæ, aut solido sine robore, cujus
Denique mobilitas linquit, texturave partes,
Ulla nec orarum circumcæsura coercet.
Hæc conjuncta adeo tota compage fatetur
Mundus, et extremo clamant in limine rerum,
(Si rebus datur extremum) primordia. Firmat
Hæc eadem tactus (tactum quis dicere falsum
Audeat?) hæc oculi nec lucidus arguit orbis.
Inde potestatum enasci densissima proles;
Nam quodcunque ferit visum, tangive laborat,
Quicquid nare bibis, vel concava concipit auris,
Quicquid lingua sapit, credas hoc omne, necesse est

Ponderibus, textu, discursu, mole, figura
Particulas præstare leves, et semina rerum.
Nunc oculos igitur pascunt, et luce ministra
Fulgere cuncta vides, spargique coloribus orbem,
Dum de sole trahunt alias, aliasque superne
Detorquent, retroque docent se vertere flammas.
Nunc trepido inter se fervent corpuscula pulsu,
Ut tremor æthera per magnum, lateque natantes
Aurarum fluctus avidi vibrantia claustra
Auditus queat allabi, sonitumque propaget.
Cominus interdum non ullo interprete per se
Nervorum invadunt teneras quatientia fibras,
Sensiferumque urgent ultro per viscera motum.

* * * * *

LIBER QUARTUS.

HACTENUS haud segnis Naturæ arcana retexi
Musarum interpres, primusque Britanna per arva
Romano liquidum deduxi flumine rivum.
Cum Tu opere in medio, spes tanti et causa laboris,
Linquis, et æternam fati te condis in umbram!
Vidi egomet duro graviter concussa dolore
Pectora, in alterius non unquam lenta dolorem;
Et languere oculos vidi, et pallescere amantem
Vultum, quo nunquam Pietas nisi rara, Fidesque,
Altus amor Veri, et purum spirabat Honestum.
Visa tamen tardi demum inclementia morbi
Cessare est, reducemque iterum roseo ore Salutem
Speravi, atque una tecum, dilecte Favoni!
Credulus heu longos, ut quondam, fallere Soles.
Heu spes nequicquam dulces, atque irrita vota!

Heu mœstos Soles, sine te quos ducere flendo
Per desideria, et questus jam cogor inanes!
At Tu, sancta anima, et nostri non indiga luctus,
Stellanti templo, sincerique ætheris igne,
Unde orta es, fruere; atque o si secura, nec ultra
Mortalis, notos olim miserata labores
Respectes, tenuesque vacet cognoscere curas;
Humanam si forte alta de sede procellam
Contemplere, metus, stimulosque cupidinis acres,
Gaudiaque et gemitus, parvoque in corde tumultum
Irarum ingentem, et sævos sub pectore fluctus;
Respice et has lacrymas, memori quas ictus amore
Fundo; quod possum, juxta lugere sepulchrum
Dum juvat, et mutæ vana hæc jactare favillæ.

MINOR LATIN POEMS.

POEMATA.

VERSES ON THE MARRIAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES.

IGNARÆ nostrum mentes, et inertia corda,
Dum curas regum, et sortem miseramur iniquam,
Quæ solio affixit, vetuitque calescere flamma
Dulci, quæ dono divum, gratissima serpit
Viscera per, mollesque animis lene implicat æstus;
Nec teneros sensus, Veneris nec præmia norunt,
Eloquiumve oculi, aut facunda silentia linguæ.
Scilicet ignorant lacrymas, sævosque dolores,
Dura rudimenta, et violentæ exordia flammæ;
Scilicet ignorant, quæ flumine tinxit amaro
Tela Venus, cæcique armamentaria Divi,
Irasque, insidiasque, et tacitum sub pectore vulnus;
Namque sub ingressu, primoque in limine Amoris
Luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia Curæ;
Intus habent dulces Risus, et Gratia sedem,
Et roseis resupina toris, roseo ore Voluptas:
Regibus huc faciles aditus; communia spernunt
Ostia, jamque expers duris custodibus istis
Panditur accessus, penetraliaque intima Templi.

Tuque Oh! Angliacis, Princeps, spes optima regnis,
Ne tantum, ne finge metum: quid imagine captus
Hæres, et mentem pictura pascis inani?
Umbram miraris: nec longum tempus, et ipsa
Ibit in amplexus, thalamosque ornabit ovantes.
Ille tamen tabulis inhians longum haurit amorem,
Affatu fruiter tacito, auscultatque tacentem
Immemor artificis calami, risumque, ruboremque
Aspicit in fucis, pictæque in virginis ore:
Tanta Venus potuit; tantus tenet error amantes.

Nascere, magna Dies, qua sese AUGUSTA Britanno
Committat Pelago, patriamque relinquat amœnam;
Cujus in adventum jam nunc tria regna secundos
Attolli in plausus, dulcique accensa furore
Incipiunt agitare modos, et carmina dicunt:
Ipse animo sed enim juvenis comitatur euntem,
Explorat ventos, atque auribus aëra captat,
Atque auras, atque astra vocat crudelia; pectus
Intentum exultat, surgitque arrecta cupido;
Incusat spes ægra fretum, solitoque videtur
Latior effundi pontus, fluctusque morantes.

Nascere, Lux major, qua sese AUGUSTA Britanno
Committat juveni totam, propriamque dicabit;
At citius (precor) Oh! cedas melioribus astris;
Nox finem pompæ, finemque imponere curis
Possit, et in thalamos furtim deducere nuptam;
Sufficiat requiemque viris, et amantibus umbras:
Adsit Hymen, et subridens cum matre Cupido
Accedant, sternantque toros, ignemque ministrent;
Ilicet haud pictæ incandescit imagine formæ
Ulterius juvenis, verumque agnoscit amorem.

Sculptile sicut ebur, faciemque arsisse venustam
Pygmaliona canunt: ante hanc suspiria ducit,
Alloquiturque amens, flammamque et vulnera narrat;
Implorata Venus jussit cum vivere signum,
Fœmineam inspirans animam; quæ gaudia surgunt,
Audiit ut primæ nascentia murmura linguæ,
Luctari in vitam, et paulatim volvere ocellos
Sedulus, aspexitque nova splendescere flamma;
Corripit amplexu vivam, jamque oscula jungit
Acria confestim, recipitque rapitque; prioris
Immemor ardoris, Nymphæque oblitus eburnæ.

LUNA HABITABILIS.

Dum Nox rorantes, non incomitata, per auras
Urget equos, tacitoque inducit sidera lapsu;
Ultima, sed nulli soror inficianda sororum,
Huc mihi, Musa; tibi patet alti janua cœli,
Astra vides, nec te numeri, nec nomina fallunt,
Huc mihi, Diva, veni; dulce est par aperta serena
Vere frui liquido, campoque errare silenti;
Vere frui dulce est; modo tu dignata petentem
Sis comes, et mecum gelida spatiere sub umbra.
Scilicet hos orbes, cœli hæc decora alta putandum est,
Noctis opes, nobis tantum lucere; virumque
Ostentari oculis, nostræ laquearia terræ,
Ingentes scenas, vastique aulæa theatri?
Oh! quis me pennis æthræ super ardua sistet
Mirantem, propiusque dabit convexa tueri;
Teque adeo, unde fluens reficit lux mollior arva
Pallidiorque dies, tristes solata tenebras?

Sic ego, subridens Dea sic ingressa vicissim :
Non pennis opus hic, supera ut simul illa petamus :
Disce, Puer, potius cœlo deducere Lunam ;
Neu crede ad magicas te invitum accingier artes,
Thessalicosve modos ; ipsam descendere Phœben
Conspicies novus Endymion ; seque offeret ultro
Visa tibi ante oculos, et nota major imago.
Quin tete admoveas (tumuli super aggere spectas,)
Compositum tubulo ; simul imum invade canalem
Sic intenta acie, cœli simul alta patescent
Atria ; jamque, ausus Lunaria visere regna,
Ingrediere solo, et caput inter nubila condes.
Ecce autem ! vitri se in vertice sistere Phœben
Cernis, et Oceanum, et crebris Freta consita terris
Panditur *ille* atram faciem caligine condens
Sublustri ; refugitque oculos, fallitque tuentem ;
Integram Solis lucem quippe haurit aperto
Fluctu avidus radiorum, et longos imbibit ignes :
Verum *his*, quæ, maculis variata nitentibus, auro
Cærula discernunt, celso sese insula dorso
Plurima protrudit, prætentaque littora saxis ;
Liberior datur his quoniam natura, minusque
Lumen depascunt liquidum ; sed tela diei
Detorquent, retroque docent se vertere flammas.
Hinc longos videas tractus, terrasque jacentes
Ordine candenti, et claros se attollere montes ;
Montes queis Rhodope assurgat, quibus Ossa nivali
Vertice : tum scopulis infra pendentibus antra
Nigrescunt clivorum umbra, nemorumque tenebris.
Non rores illi, aut desunt sua nubila mundo ;
Non frigus gelidum, atque herbis gratissimus imber ;
His quoque nota ardet picto Thaumantias arcu,
Os roseum Auroræ, propriique crepuscula cœli.

Et dubitas tantum certis cultoribus orbem
Destitui? exercent agros, sua mœnia condunt
Hi quoque, vel Martem invadunt, curantque triumphos
Victores: sunt hic etiam sua præmia laudi;
His metus, atque amor, et mentem mortalia tangunt.
Quin, uti nos oculis jam nunc juvat ire per arva,
Lucentesque plagas Lunæ, pontumque profundum;
Idem illos etiam ardor agit, cum se aureus effert
Sub sudum globus, et terrarum ingentior orbis;
Scilicet omne æquor tum lustrant, scilicet omnem
Tellurem, gentesque polo sub utroque jacentes;
Et quidam æstivi indefessus ad ætheris ignes
Pervigilat, noctem exercens, cœlumque fatigat;
Jam Galli apparent, jam se Germania late
Tollit, et albescens pater Apenninus ad auras;
Jam tandem in Borean, en! parvulus Anglia nævus
(Quanquam aliis longe fulgentior) extulit oras;
Formosum extemplo lumen, maculamque nitentem
Invisunt crebri Proceres, serumque tuendo
Hærent, certatimque suo cognomine signant:
Forsitan et Lunæ longinquus in orbe Tyrannus
Se dominum vocat, et nostra se jactat in aula.
Terras possim alias propiori sole calentes
Narrare, atque alias, jubaris queis parcior usus,
Lunarum chorus, et tenuis penuria Phœbi;
Ni, meditans eadem hæc audaci evolvere cantu,
Jam pulset citharam soror, et præludia tentet.
Non tamen has proprias laudes, nec facta silebo
Jampridem in fatis, patriæque oracula famæ.
Tempus erit, sursum totos contendere cœtus
Quo cernes longo excursu, primosque colonos
Migrare in lunam, et notos mutare Penates:
Dum stupet obtutu tacito vetus incola, longeque
Insolitas explorat aves, classemque volantem.

Ut quondam ignotum marmor, camposque natantes
Tranavit Zephyros visens, nova regna, Columbus;
Litora mirantur circum, mirantur et undæ
Inclusas acies ferro, turmasque biformes,
Monstraque fœta armis, et non imitabile fulmen.
Fœdera mox icta, et gemini commercia mundi,
Agminaque assueto glomerata sub æthere cerno.
Anglia, quæ pelagi jamdudum torquet habenas,
Exercetque frequens ventos, atque imperat undæ;
Aëris attollet fasces, veteresque triumphos
Huc etiam feret, et victis dominabitur auris.

SAPPHIC ODE—TO MR. WEST.

BARBARAS ædes aditure mecum
Quas Eris semper fovet inquieta,
Lis ubi late sonat, et togatum
Æstuat agmen;

Dulcius quanto, patulis sub ulmi
Hospitæ ramis temere jacentem
Sic libris horas, tenuique inertes
Fallere Musa?

Sæpe enim curis vagor expedita
Mente; dum, blandam meditans Camœnam,
Vix malo rori, meminive seræ
Cedere nocti;

Et, pedes quo me rapiunt, in omni
Colle Parnassum videor videre
Fertilem sylvæ, gelidamque in omni
Fonte Aganippen.

Risit et Ver me, facilesque Nymphæ
Nare captantem, nec ineleganti,
Mane quicquid de violis eundo
Surripit aura:

Me reclinatum teneram per herbam;
Qua leves cursus aqua cunque ducit,
Et moras dulci strepitu lapillo
Nectit in omni.

Hæ novo nostrum fere pectus anno
Simplices curæ tenuere, cœlum
Quamdiu sudum explicuit Favoni
Purior hora:

Otia et campos nec adhuc relinquo,
Nec magis Phœbo Clytie fidelis;
(Ingruant venti licet, et senescat
Mollior æstas:)

Namque, seu, lætos hominum labores
Prataque et montes recreante curru,
Purpura tractus oriens Eoos
Vestit, et auro;

Sedulus servo veneratus orbem
Prodigum splendoris: amœniori
Sive dilectam meditatur igne
Pingere Calpen;

Usque dum, fulgore magis magis jam
Languido circum, variata nubes
Labitur furtim, viridisque in umbras
Scena recessit.

O ego felix, vice si (nec unquam
Surgerem rursus) simili cadentem
Parca me lenis sineret quieto
Fallere Letho!

Multa flagranti radiisque cincto
Integris ah! quam nihil inviderem,
Cum Dei ardentes medius quadrigas
Sentit Olympus.

ALCAIC FRAGMENT.

O LACRYMARUM fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo; quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.

LATIN LINES

ADDRESSED TO MR. WEST, FROM GENOA.

HORRIDOS tractus, Boreæque linquens
Regna Taurini fera, molliorem
Advehor brumam, Genuæque amantes
Litora soles.

ELEGIAC VERSES,

OCCASIONED BY THE SIGHT OF THE PLAINS WHERE THE BATTLE OF TREBIA WAS FOUGHT.

QUA Trebie glaucas salices intersecat unda,
Arvaque Romanis nobilitata malis;
Visus adhuc amnis veteri de clade rubere,
Et suspirantes ducere mœstus aquas;
Maurorumque ala, et nigræ increbescere turmæ,
Et pulsa Ausonidum ripa sonare fuga.

CARMEN AD C. FAVONIUM ZEPHYRINUM.

MATER rosarum, cui teneræ vigent
Auræ Favoni, cui Venus it comes
Lasciva, Nympharum choreis
Et volucrum celebrata cantu!

Dic, non inertem fallere qua diem
Amat sub umbra, seu sinet aureum
Dormire plectrum, seu retentat
Pierio Zephyrinus antro

Furore dulci plenus, et immemor
Reptantis inter frigora Tusculi
Umbrosa, vel colles Amici
Palladiæ superantis Albæ.

Dilecta Fauno, et capripedum choris
Pineta, testor vos, Anio minax
Quæcunque per clivos volutus
Præcipiti tremefecit amne,

Illius altum Tibur, et Æsulæ
Audisse sylvas nomen amabiles,
Illius et gratas Latinis
Naïsin ingeminasse rupes;

Nam me Latinæ Naïdes uvida
Videre ripa, qua niveas levi
Tam sæpe lavit rore plumas
Dulce canens Venusinus ales;

Mirum! canenti conticuit nemus,
Sacrique fontes, et retinent adhuc
(Sic Musa jussit) saxa molles
Docta modos, veteresque lauri.

Mirare nec tu me citharæ rudem
Claudis laborantem numeris: loca
Amœna, jucundumque ver in-
compositum docuere carmen;

Hærent sub omni nam folio nigri
Phœbea lucî (credite) somnia,
Argutiusque et lympha et auræ
Nescio quid solito loquuntur.

A FAREWELL TO FLORENCE.

* * Oh Fæsulæ amœna
Frigoribus juga, nec nimium spirantibus auris!
Alma quibus Tusci Pallas decus Apennini
Esse dedit, glaucaque sua canescere sylva!
Non ego vos posthac Arni de valle videbo
Porticibus circum, et candenti cincta corona
Villarum longe nitido consurgere dorso,
Antiquamve Ædem, et veteres præferre Cupressus
Mirabor, tectisque super pendentia tecta.

FRAGMENT OF A LATIN POEM ON MOUNT GAURUS.

Nec procul infelix se tollit in æthera Gaurus,
Prospiciens vitreum lugenti vertice pontum:
Tristior ille diu, et veteri desuetus oliva
Gaurus, pampineæque eheu! jam nescius umbræ;
Horrendi tam sæva premit vicinia montis,
Attonitumque urget latus, exuritque ferentem.
Nam fama est olim, media dum rura silebant
Nocte, Deo victa, et molli perfusa quiete,
Infremuisse æquor ponti, auditamque per omnes
Late tellurem surdum immugire cavernas:
Quo sonitu nemora alta tremunt: tremit excita tuto
Parthenopæa sinu, flammantisque ora Vesevi.
At subito se aperire solum, vastosque recessus
Pandere sub pedibus, nigraque voragine fauces;

Tum piceas cinerum glomerare sub æthere nubes
Vorticibus rapidis, ardentique imbre procellam.
Præcipites fugere feræ, perque avia longe
Sylvarum fugit pastor, juga per deserta,
Ah, miser! increpitans sæpe alta voce per umbram
Nequicquam natos, creditque audire sequentes.
Atque ille excelso rupis de vertice solus
Respectans notasque domos, et dulcia regna,
Nil usqam videt infelix præter mare tristi
Lumine percussum, et pallentes sulphure campos
Fumumque, flammasque, rotataque turbine saxa.
Quin ubi detonuit fragor, et lux reddita cœlo;
Mæstos confluere agricolas, passuque videres
Tandem iterum timido deserta requirere tecta:
Sperantes, si forte oculis, si forte darentür
Uxorum cineres, miserorumve ossa parentum
(Tenuia, sed tanti saltem solatia luctus)
Una colligere et justa componere in urna.
Uxorem nusquam cineres, nusquam ossa parentum
(Spem miseram!) assuetosve Lares, aut rura videbunt.
Quippe ubi planities campi diffusa jacebat;
Mons novus: ille supercilium, frontemque favilla
Incanum ostentans, ambustis cautibus, æquor
Subjectum, stragemque suam, mæsta arva, minaci
Despicit imperio, soloque in littore regnat.
Hinc infame loci nomen, multosque per annos
Immemor antiquæ laudis, nescire labores
Vomeris, et nullo tellus revirescere cultu.
Non avium colles, non carmine matutino
Pastorum resonare; adeo undique dirus habebat
Informes late horror agros saltusque vacantes.
Sæpius et longe detorquens navita proram
Monstrabat digito littus, sævæque revolvens
Funera narrabat noctis, veteremque ruinam.

Montis adhuc facies manet hirta atque aspera saxis :
Sed furor extinctus jamdudum, et flamma quievit,
Quæ nascenti aderat ; seu forte bituminis atri
Defluxere olim rivi, atque effœta lacuna
Pabula sufficere ardori, viresque recusat ;
Sive in visceribus meditans incendia jam nunc
(Horrendum) arcanis glomerat genti esse futuræ
Exitio, sparsos tacitusque recolligit ignes.
Raro per clivos haud secius ordine vidi
Canescentem oleam : longum post tempus amicti
Vite virent tumuli ; patriamque revisere gaudens
Bacchus in assuetis tenerum caput exerit arvis
Vix tandem, infidoque audet se credere cœlo.

ALCAIC ODE,

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE, IN DAUPHINY, AUGUST 1741.

OH Tu, severi Religio loci,
Quocunque gaudes nomine (non leve
Nativa nam certe fluenta
Numen habet, veteresque sylvas ;

Præsentiorem et conspicimus Deum
Per invias rupes, fera per juga,
Clivosque præruptos, sonantes
Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem ;

Quam si repostus sub trabe citrea
Fulgeret auro, et Phidiaca manu :)
Salve vocanti rite, fesso et
Da placidam juveni quietem.

Quod si invidendis sedibus, et frui
Fortuna sacra lege silentii
Vetat volentem, me resorbens
In medios violenta fluctus:

Saltem remoto des, Pater, angulo
Horas senectæ ducere liberas;
Tutumque vulgari tumultu
Surripias, hominumque curis.

PART OF AN HEROIC EPISTLE

FROM SOPHONISBA TO MASINISSA.

EGREGIUM accipio promissi Munus amoris,
Inque manu mortem, jam fruitura, fero:
Atque utinam citius mandasses, luce vel una;
Transieram Stygios non inhonesta lacus.
Victoris nec passa toros, nova nupta, mariti,
Nec fueram fastus, Roma superba, tuos.
Scilicet hæc partem tibi, Masinissa, triumphi
Detractam, hæc pompæ jura minora suæ
Imputat, atque uxor quod non tua pressa catenis,
Objecta et sævi plausibus orbis eo:
Quin tu pro tantis cepisiti præmia factis,
Magnum Romanæ pignus amicitiæ!
Scipiadæ excuses, oro, si tardius utar
Munere. Non nimium vivere, crede, velim.
Parva mora est, breve sed tempus mea fama requirit:
Detinet hæc animam cura suprema meam.
Quæ patriæ prodesse meæ Regina ferebar,
Inter Elisæas gloria prima nurus,
Ne videar flammæ nimis indulsisse secundæ,

Vel nimis hostiles extimuisse manus.
Fortunam atque annos liceat revocare priores,
Gaudiaque heu! quantis nostra repensa malis.
Primitiasne tuas meministi atque arma Syphacis
Fusa, et per Tyrias ducta tropæa vias?
(Laudis at antiquæ forsan meminisse pigebit,
Quodque decus quondam causa ruboris erit;)
Tempus ego certe memini, felicia Pœnis
Quo te non puduit solvere vota deis;
Mœniaque intrantem vidi: longo agmine duxit
Turba salutantum, purpureique patres.
Fœminea ante omnes longe admiratur euntem,
Hæret et aspectu tota caterva tuo.
Jam flexi, regale decus, per colla capilli,
Jam decet ardenti fuscus in ore color!
Commendat frontis generosa modestia formam,
Seque cupit laudi surripuisse suæ.
Prima genas tenui signat vix flore juventas,
Et dextræ soli credimus esse virum.
Dum faciles gradiens oculos per singula *jactas*,
(Seu rexit casus lumina, sive Venus)
In me (vel certe visum est) conversa morari
Sensi; virgineus perculit ora pudor.
Nescio quid vultum molle spirare tuendo,
Crediderамque tuos lentius ire pedes.
Quærebam, juxta æqualis si dignior esset,
Quæ poterat visus detinuisse tuos:
Nulla fuit circum æqualis quæ dignior esset,
Asseruitque decus conscia forma suum.
Pompæ finis erat. Tota vix nocte quievi,
Sin premat invitæ lumina victa sopor,
Somnus habet pompas, eademque recursat imago;
Atque iterum hesterno munere victor ades.

* * * * * *

PETRARCA, PART I. SONNETTO 170.

LASSO! ch' i' ardo, ed altri non mel crede:
Sì crede ogne uom, se non sola colei
Che sovr' ogni altra, e ch' i' sola vorrei:
Ella non par che 'l creda, e sì sel vede:
Infinita bellezza, e poca fede,
Non vedete voi 'l cor negli occhi miei?
Se non fosse mia stella, i' pur devrei
Al fonte di pietà trovar mercede.
Quest' arder mio, di che vi cal sì poco,
E i vostri onori in mie rime diffusi
Ne porían infiammar fors' ancor mille:
Ch' i' veggio nel pensier, dolce mio foco,
Fredda una lingua, e duo begli occhi chiusi
Rimaner dopo noi pien' di faville.

IMITATED.

UROR, io; veros at nemo credidit ignes:
Quin credunt omnes; dura sed illa negat,
Illa negat, soli volumus cui posse probare;
Quin videt, et visos improba dissimulat.
Ah, durissima mi, sed et, ah, pulcherrima rerum!
Nonne animam in misera, Cynthia, fronte vides?
Omnibus illa pia est; et, si non fata vetassent,
Tam longas mentem flecteret ad lacrymas.
Sed tamen has lacrymas, hunc tu, quem spreveris, ignem,
Carminaque auctori non bene culta suo,
Turba futurorum non ignorabit amantum:
Nos duo, cumque erimus parvus uterque cinis.
Jamque faces, eheu! oculorum, et frigida lingua,
Hæ sine luce jacent, immemor illa loqui;
Infelix musa æternos spirabit amores,
Ardebitque urna multa favilla mea.

TRANSLATIONS AND IMITATIONS,

FROM THE "ANTHOLOGIA GRÆCA."

IN BACCHÆ FURENTIS STATUAM.

Ἔκφρονα τὴν βάκχην οὐχ ἡ φύσις, ἀλλ' ἡ τέχνη
θήκατο, ταὶ μανίην ἐγκατέμιξε λίθῳ.

CREDITE, non viva est Mænas; non spirat imago:
Artificis rabiem miscuit ære manus.

GREEK EPIGRAM.

Ἀζόμενος πολύθηρον ἐκηβόλου ἅλσος ἀνάσσας,
Τᾶς δεινᾶς τεμένη λείπε κυναγὲ θεᾶς,
Μοῦνοι ἄρ' ἔνθα κύνων ζαθέων κλαγγεῦσιν ὑλάγμοι,
Ἀνταχεῖς Νυμφᾶν ἀγροτερᾶν κελάδῳ.

IN ALEXANDRUM, ÆRE EFFICTUM.

Λύσιππε, πλίστα Σικυώνιε, θαρσαλέη χεὶρ,
δάΐε τεχνῖτα, πῦρ τοι ὁ χαλκὸς ὀρῇ,
ὃν κατ' Ἀλεξάνδρου μορφᾶς χέες. οὐκέτι μεμπτοὶ
Πέρσαι· συγγνώμη βουσὶ λέοντα φυγεῖν.

QUANTUM audet, Lysippe, manus tua! surgit in ære
Spiritus, atque oculis bellicus ignis adest:
Spectate hos vultus, miserisque ignoscite Persis:
Quid mirum, imbelles si leo sparsit oves?

IN MEDEÆ IMAGINEM, NOBILE TIMOMACHI OPUS.

Τὰν ὁλοὰν Μήδειαν ὅτ' ἔγραφε Τιμομάχου χεὶρ,
ζάλῳ καὶ τέκνοις ἀντιμεθελκομέναν,
μυρίον ἄρατο μόχθον, ἵν' ἤθεα δισσὰ χαράξῃ,
ὧν τὸ μὲν εἰς ὀργὰν νεῦε, τὸ δ' εἰς ἔλεον.
ἄμφω δ' ἐπλήρωσεν. ὅρα τύπον. ἐν γὰρ ἀπειλᾷ
δάκρυον, ἐν δ' ἐλέῳ θυμὸς ἀναστρέφεται.
Αρκεῖ δ' ἁ μέλλησις, ἔφα σοφός· αἷμα δὲ τέκνων
ἔπρεπε Μηδείῃ, κοὐ χερὶ Τιμομάχου.

EN ubi Medeæ varius dolor æstuat ore,
Jamque animum nati, jamque maritus, habent!
Succenset, miseret, medio exardescit amore,
Dum furor inque oculo gutta minante tremit.
Cernis adhuc dubiam; quid enim? licet impia matris
Colchidos, at non sit dextera Timomachi.

IN NIOBES STATUAM.

Ἐκ ζωῆς με θεοὶ ποιῆσαν λίθον· ἐκ δὲ λίθοιο
ζωὴν Πραξιτέλης ἔμπαλιν εἰργάσατο.

FECERAT e viva lapidem me Jupiter; at me
Praxiteles vivam reddidit e lapide.

IN AMOREM DORMIENTEM.

Εὕδεις ἀγρύπνους ἐπάγων θνητοῖσι μερίμνας,
εὕδεις ἀτηρῆς ἃ τέκος Ἀφρογενοῦς,
οὐ πεύκην πυρόεσσαν ἐπηρμένος, οὐδ' ἀφύλακτον
ἐκ κέραος ψάλλων ἀντιτύνοιο βέλος.
ἄλλοι θαρσείτωσαν· ἐγὼ δ', ἀγέρωχε, δέδοικα
μή μοι καὶ κνώσσων πικρὸν ὄνειρον ἴδῃς.

DOCTE puer vigiles mortalibus addere curas,
Anne potest in te somnus habere locum?
Laxi juxta arcus, et fax suspensa quiescit,
Dormit et in pharetra clausa sagitta sua;
Longe mater abest; longe Cythereia turba:
Verum ausint alii te prope ferre pedem,
Non ego; nam metui valde, mihi, perfide, quiddam
Forsan et in somnis ne meditere mali.

FROM A FRAGMENT OF PLATO.

Ἅλσος δ' ὡς ἱκόμεσθα βαθύσκιον, εὕρομεν ἔνδον
πορφυρέοις μήλοισιν ἐοικότα παῖδα Κυθήρης,
οὐδ' ἔχεν ἰοδόκον φαρέτρην, οὐ καμπύλα τόξα·
ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν δένδρεσσιν ὑπ' εὐπετάλοισι κρέμαντο·
αὐτὸς δ' ἐν καλύκεσσι ῥόδων πεπεδημένος ὕπνῳ
εὗδεν μειδιόων· ξουθαὶ δ' ἐφύπερθε μέλισσαι
κηροχύτοις ἐντὸς λαροῖς ἐπὶ χείλεσι βαῖνον.

ITUR in Idalios tractus, felicia regna,
Fundit ubi densam myrtea sylva comam,
Intus Amor teneram visus spirare quietem,
Dum roseo roseos imprimit ore toros;

Sublimem procul a ramis pendere pharetram,
  Et de languidula spicula lapsa manu,
Vidimus, et risu molli diducta labella
  Murmure quæ assiduo pervolitabat apis.

IN FONTEM AQUÆ CALIDÆ.

Τᾷδ' ὑπὸ τὰς πλατάνους ἀπαλῷ τετρυμένος ὕπνῳ
  εὗδεν Ἔρως, Νύμφαις λαμπάδα παρθέμενος.
Νύμφαι δ' ἀλλήλῃσι, Τί μέλλομεν; αἶθε δὲ τούτῳ
  σβέσσαμεν, εἶπον, ὁμοῦ πῦρ κραδίης μερόπων.
λαμπὰς δ' ὡς ἔφλεξε καὶ ὕδατα, θερμὸν ἐκεῖθεν
  Νύμφαι Ἐρωτιάδες λουτροχοεύσιν ὕδωρ.

SUB platanis puer Idalius prope fluminis undam
  Dormiit, in ripa deposuitque facem.
Tempus adest, sociæ, Nympharum audentior una,
  Tempus adest, ultra quid dubitamus? ait.
Ilicet incurrit, pestem ut divumque hominumque
  Lampada collectis exanimaret aquis:
Demens! nam nequiit sævam restinguere flammam
  Nympha, sed ipsa ignes traxit, et inde calet.

Μῦν Ἀσκληπιάδης ὁ φιλάργυρος εἶδεν ἐν οἴκῳ,
  καὶ, Τί ποιεῖς, φησιν, φίλτατε μῦ παρ' ἐμοί;
ἡδὺ δ' ὁ μῦς γελάσας, Μηδὲν φίλε, φησὶ, φοβηθῇς·
  οὐχὶ τροφῆς παρὰ σοὶ χρῄζομεν, ἀλλὰ μονῆς.

IRREPSISSE suas murem videt Argus in ædes,
Atque ait, heus, a me nunquid, amice, velis?
Ille autem ridens, metuas nihil, inquit; apud te,
O bone, non epulas, hospitium petimus.

Πέμπω σοι, Ροδόκλεια, τόδε στέφος, ἄνθεσι καλοῖς
αὐτὸς ἐν ἡμετέραις πλεξάμενος παλάμαις.
ἔστι κρίνον, ῥοδέη τε κάλυξ, νοτερή τ' ἀνεμώνη,
καὶ νάρκισσος ὑγρὸς, καὶ κυανανγὲς ἴον.
ταῦτα δε στεψαμένη, λῆξον μεγάλαυχος ἐοῦσα.
ἀνθεῖς καὶ λήγεις καὶ σὺ καὶ ὁ στέφανος.

HANC tibi Rufinus mittit, Rodoclea, coronam,
Has tibi decerpens texerat ipse rosas;
Est viola, est anemone, est suave-rubens hyacinthus,
Mistaque Narcisso lutea caltha suo:
Sume; sed aspiciens, ah, fidere desine formæ;
Qui pinxit, brevis est, sertaque teque, color.

AD AMOREM.

Λίσσομ', Ἔρως, τὸν ἄγρυπνον ἐμοὶ πόθον Ἡλιοδώρου
κοίμισον, αἰδεσθεὶς Μοῦσαν ἐμὰν ἱκέτιν.
ναὶ γὰρ δὴ τὰ σὰ τόξα, τὰ μη δεδιδαγμένα βάλλειν
ἄλλον, ἀεὶ δ' ἐπ' ἐμοὶ πτηνὰ χέοντα βέλη,
εἴ κεν ἐμὲ κτείνῃς, λείψω φωνεῦντ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ
γράμματ'. Ἔρωτος ὅρα ξείνε μιαφονίην.

PAULISPER vigiles, oro, compesce dolores,
Respue nec musæ supplicis aure preces;
Oro brevem lacrymis veniam, requiemque furori:
Ah, ego non possum vulnera tanta pati!
Intima flamma, vides, miseros depascitur artus,
Surgit et extremis spiritus in labiis:
Quod si tam tenuem cordi est exsolvere vitam,
Stabit in opprobrium sculpta querela tuum.
Juro perque faces istas, arcumque sonantem,
Spiculaque hoc unum figere docta jecur;
Heu fuge crudelem puerum, sævasque sagittas!
Huic fuit exitii causa, viator, Amor.

THE END.

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